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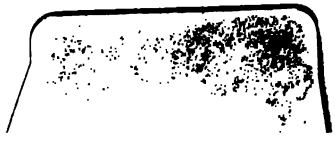

HOGARTH'S

MUSICAL HISTORY.

THE SECOND EDITION, ENLARGED,

IN TWO VOLUMES.

MUSICAL HISTORY,

BIOGRAPHY, AND CRITICISM.

BY

GEORGE HOGARTH.

VOLUME I.

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PREFACE.

At a period when Music is more and more extensively cultivated, as a branch of polite knowledge, as a powerful aid in the exercises of devotion, and as a rational and elegant recreation in social and domestic life, a work like the present appears to be called for. Dr. Burney's *History of Music*, from its magnitude, is not calculated for general use, and, moreover, does not embrace the last half century, —a most eventful and interesting period of the art. A work upon the plan of Dr. Burney's, the fruit of similar learning and research, equally attractive in its style, and better proportioned in the relative extent of its different parts, would be most welcome to those who are inclined to enter deeply into the study of musical history and antiquities. The minute details, however, which such a work must necessarily contain, would have little interest for a numerous and daily increasing description of readers, whose taste for the art leads them to desire a general knowledge, not only of its present state among ourselves, but of its history in other times and countries.

It is for this class of readers that the present work is intended. The author's object is to give that information respecting the progress of Music, the personal history of the most eminent Musicians, and the present state of the art in this and other countries, which is now looked upon as indispensable to every person of liberal attainments. He has endeavoured to use simple and perspicuous language, avoiding technical phraseology and abstruse discussions; these, in truth, being wholly unnecessary in treating of Music, not as an intricate science, but as one of the most beautiful of the Fine Arts. He has entered, as fully as the plan of a concise and popular work would admit of, into an examination of the works of the great masters; endeavouring to illustrate those principles of criticism which are the foundation of sound judgments on musical subjects. His opinions, he knows, are not always in accordance with those which have been advanced by critics superior to himself; and he is very far from having any overweening confidence his own infallibility. He may have taken narrow views, or (like many of his betters) may have been sometimes blinded by prejudice. But his opinions have been carefully formed; and any errors that may be laid to his charge are certainly not the result of wilful perversion of judgment.

The following pages contain a view of the state of music among the ancients; an account of its revival in the middle ages; and a history of its progress in Italy, Germany, France, and England, down to the present time. It embraces biographical sketches of the greatest musicians, (the lives of many of whom are full of interest,) and critical remarks on their productions.

It is hardly necessary to say, that the same minuteness of historical detail cannot be expected in this as in a larger work. But, in taking a general survey of the art, the Author's object has been to select its most prominent and important features; and he believes he has omitted very few musicians whose labours have materially influenced its progress.

On one interesting topic he has not touched, further than in the way of incidental remark. This is the *national*, or *traditional* music of different countries. But this, as yet, is more a matter of inquiry and speculation than of history. Before a history of national music can be written, multitudes of volumes, unconnected with the subject of music, must be ransacked; and even then the materials will be meagre and unsatisfactory. Travellers are seldom sufficiently versed in music to collect and note down accurately the melodies,

or to describe distinctly the musical instruments, and the modes of vocal and instrumental performance, of the countries they visit. A historian of national music must not only spend years in collecting and digesting the fragments of information scattered through innumerable volumes, but, like another Burney, only on a much more extensive scale, must make a series of "Musical Tours" through the remotest regions of the earth.

POSTSCRIPT TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE Author's belief that, in the present advanced state of musical taste, a work like the present is called for, has been fully confirmed by the favourable manner in which it has been received by the public. In preparing a Second Edition for the press, therefore, he has not only bestowed upon the book a very careful revisal, but has thought it expedient to extend its plan, by treating with greater minuteness of detail several parts of the subject to which he was prevented from doing justice by the narrowness of the space to which he at first had limited himself. He flatters himself, accordingly, that, in the Volumes now presented to the public, a considerable quantity of valuable and interesting matter has been added, and that the different topics are treated with degrees of fulness more nearly proportioned than before to their relative importance.

March, 1838.

THE science of musical sounds, though it may have been depreciated, as appealing only to the ear, and affording nothing more than a momentary and fugitive delight, may be, with justice, considered as the art which unites corporal with intellectual pleasure, by a species of enjoyment which gratifies sense without weakening reason, and which, therefore, the great may cultivate without debasement, and the good enjoy without depravation.
——*Dedication to* DR. BURNEY'S *History of Music* (*written by* DR. JOHNSON).

MUSICAL HISTORY.

CHAPTER I.

THE MUSIC OF THE ANCIENTS.—MUSIC OF THE HEBREWS—THE EGYPTIANS—THE GREEKS—THE ROMANS.

MUSIC, though now a very complex and difficult art, is, in truth, a gift of the Author of Nature to the whole human race. Its existence and influence are to be traced in the records of every people from the earliest ages, and are perceptible, at the present time, in every quarter of the globe. It is a part of the benevolent order of Providence, that we are capable of receiving from the objects around us, pleasures independent of the immediate purposes for which they have been created. Our eyes do not merely enable us to see external things, so as to avail ourselves of their useful properties; they enable us also to enjoy the delight produced by the perception of *beauty*, a perception which (upon whatever principle it may be explained,) is something distinct from any consideration of the mere utility of an object. We could have had the most accurate perceptions of the form and position of everything that constitutes the most beautiful landscape, without receiving any idea of its beauty. We could have beheld the sun setting amid the glowing tints of a summer evening, without think-

ing of anything beyond the advantage of serene weather; we might have contemplated the glassy expanse of the ocean reflecting the tranquil beams of the moon, without any other feeling than the comfort of a safe and easy navigation; and the varieties of hill and dale, of shady woods and luxuriant verdure, might have been pleasant only in the eyes of farmers or graziers. We could, too, have listened to *sounds* with equal indifference to everything beyond the mere information they conveyed to us; and the sighing of the breeze, or the murmuring of the brook, while we learned from them nothing of which we could avail ourselves, might have been heard without pleasure. It is evident that the perception of external things, for the mere purpose of making use of them, has no connexion with the feeling of their beauty; and that our Creator, therefore, has bestowed on us this additional feeling, for the purpose of augmenting our happiness. Had he not had this design, he might have left us without the sense of beauty or deformity. "If God," says Paley, "had wished our misery, he might have made sure of his purpose by forming our senses to be as many sores and pains to us as they are now instruments of our gratification and enjoyment; or by placing us among objects so ill-suited to our perceptions, as to have continually offended us, instead of ministering to our refreshment and delight. He might have made, for instance, everything we saw loathsome, everything we touched a sting, and every sound a discord."

In place of every sound being a discord, the greatest part of the sounds which we hear are more or less agreeable to us. The infinite variety of sounds pro-

duced by the winds and waters,—the cries of animals, the notes of birds,—and, above all, the tones of the human voice, all affect us with various kinds and degrees of pleasure; and, in general, it may be said, that it is such sounds as indicate something to be feared and avoided, such as the howling of wild beasts, or the hissing of serpents, that are positively painful to our ears. In this sense, all nature may be said to be full of music; the disagreeable and discordant sounds being (as in artificial music,) in such proportion only as to heighten the pleasure derived from those which are agreeable. The human voice is that which pleases us chiefly, and affects us most powerfully. Its natural tones and accents are calculated to penetrate the heart of the listener; and the union of these to articulate speech, in every language, not only produces a melody which pleases the ear, but an effect on the feelings, of which the mere words would be incapable. These natural tones of the voice, either by themselves, or joined to articulate language, constitute music in its simplest state; and the pleasures and feelings derived from such music must necessarily have existed in every form of society.

The history of Music, therefore, is coeval with the history of our species. In the earlier ages of the world, of the music of which no remains have descended to the present times, its history must be gleaned from ancient literature; and the scanty lights thus afforded, must be aided, (as far as possible,) by conjectures derived from the state of music in those rude and primitive stages of society which come under our own observation. Volumes upon volumes have been written

upon the music of the ancients, full of learned research and ingenious speculation; but the results have by no means repaid the labour. From these works, a good deal of information may be acquired respecting the customs and manners of the ancients; but they hardly contain a single fact which can be of any use to the practical musician of the present day, or to those *dilettanti* who prosecute musical inquiries from a love of the art as it now exists.

Without reference to historical details of any sort, it may be concluded, from the existence of music in every state of society at the present day, that it also existed in the earliest ages of the world. We find that the music of uncultivated tribes, and the music which, in civilized nations, has descended from their rude ancestors, though presenting many varieties, arising from the character of the people, the genius of their language, and other causes, has yet a strong general resemblance. By analyzing the simple melodies found among the common people of Scotland, Ireland, France, and other parts of Europe, and in Hindostan, Persia, the Islands of the Indian Ocean, Africa, and even China, it is discovered that these melodies are formed upon a certain scale or series of sounds, which, therefore, is dictated and rendered agreeable to our ears by an original law of nature; and this scale, too, is substantially the same as that on which the most artificial music of the present day is founded, the latter being only rendered more extensive and complete. It cannot, then, be doubted, that, in the most ancient times, there existed melodies founded on a similar scale, and possessing similar characters to the national music of the

present day: and it may reasonably be supposed, that the strains, for example, of the shepherds and herdsmen of the patriarchal ages, whose manners are so beautifully described in Holy Writ, were nearly akin to the untutored lays which are found to express the loves and griefs of the present pastoral inhabitants of similar regions.

The most ancient notices of music are to be found in the Bible. The invention of musical instruments is ascribed, in the Book of Genesis, to Jubal, who is mentioned as being the "father of such as handle the harp and organ." The invention of instruments at this early age of the world implies the previous existence of vocal music; for instruments have always been devised for the purpose of imitating the melodious accents of the human voice. What was the nature of the instruments invented by Jubal, can only be matter of conjecture; for the words "harp and organ," used in our translation of the Scriptures, are not to be held as meaning the instruments now known by these names. The translators of the Bible into modern languages, knowing nothing of the instruments used among the Hebrews, seem to have employed the names of modern instruments almost at random, in this as well as other places. In the French translation of this passage, the words "le violon et les orgues" are found; and in the CLth Psalm, where there is an enumeration of the instruments then in use among the Hebrews, the French translators have again used the word "violon," though there is not the slightest reason for supposing that any instrument at all analogous to the violin was known prior to the middle ages.

That the Hebrews were a very musical people, appears from every part of the Old Testament; music being mentioned as forming a part of all their religious rites and ceremonies, and as being used on all festive occasions, whether public or private. During the reigns of David and Solomon, the most splendid period in Jewish history, this art seems to have been at its height among that people. David was himself a musician; and his inspired lyrics, the Psalms, were set to music for the purpose of being performed by "the chief musician," and the band or orchestra under his direction, which consisted of numerous singing men and singing women, and players upon different instruments. Of these instruments nothing more is known, than that some of them had strings, seemingly on the principle of the modern harp; that others were of the nature of horns, or trumpets; and that others were beaten, like cymbals. As to the music itself, it probably resembled very much the rude, but frequently grand and imposing music still to be heard in various parts of the East, consisting of a very simple strain or melody, adapted to the enunciation of a long poem, sung by a single voice, intermixed with chorusses in the unison or octave, and accompanied in a similar manner by instruments. During the period of their national prosperity, the Hebrews appear to have excelled their contemporaries in music, as in other arts; for, in the beautiful Lamentation composed on the Babylonian captivity (the CXXXVIIth Psalm), the captives are described as being importuned by their oppressors to entertain them with the "Songs of Zion." "For they that led us away captives required of us a song, and melody in our heaviness, saying,

Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning!" Though the Hebrew people were afterwards restored to their country, yet their subsequent history is that of a continual decline, down to their total destruction as a nation, and affords no materials whatever for throwing light on the state of their music.

That music was cultivated by some of the nations by whom the Jewish power was overthrown, particularly among the Chaldeans, appears from different passages in the sacred writers. Daniel describes the musical establishment at the court of Nebuchadnezzar as being magnificent, and as comprehending the different instruments in use among the Hebrews. For their music and instruments, the Chaldeans were probably indebted to their captives. But there is one people, the Egyptians, among whom music, like other arts and sciences, seems to have flourished in the most remote ages, and in a degree far surpassing anything at which they afterwards arrived in other parts of the ancient world.

This wonderful people were formed into a powerful kingdom, at a period when the ancestors of the Jews were confined to the single family of Jacob. Even then, they appear, from the Book of Genesis, to have been far advanced in civilization; possessed, of course, of music, as well as those arts which belong more exclusively to polished life. By the concurring testimony of Greek writers, music was cultivated in Egypt from the most distant times to which their records ascend. From these writers, however, we learn nothing more than the fact, that music was cultivated, and that the

Greeks derived from the Egyptians many of their musical instruments. But there still exist some pieces of Egyptian antiquity, from which it may be inferred that the music of that country must have been, like other arts, in a great measure lost, before it began to be cultivated by the Greeks.

One of these is an Egyptian pillar, brought to Rome by Augustus, and still to be seen there, where it is known by the name of the *guglia rotta*. On this pillar, (which is supposed by the most learned antiquaries to have been erected by Sesostris several centuries before the Trojan war), there is a representation of a musical instrument of two strings, and having a neck somewhat resembling the modern lute. Now, the contrivance of giving to stringed instruments a neck, or finger-board, by which one string can be made to produce a series of notes by the pressure of the different fingers, was totally unknown to the Greeks; and this method of increasing the powers of stringed instruments was one of the circumstances which contributed most essentially to the advancement of modern music. The possession, by the Egyptians, of this most important expedient, and its being unknown to the Greeks, would lead to the inference, that, as the Egyptians had an instrument so much more perfect than any of those known to the Greeks, they possessed a kind of music corresponding to the superior powers of this instrument.

Another piece of Egyptian antiquity was discovered by Mr. Bruce, and is minutely described by him in a letter to Dr. Burney. It is a drawing of a musical instrument, in an ancient sepulchre adjoining to the ruins of Thebes. After describing the sepulchre, and

its indications of a very remote antiquity, Mr. Bruce gives an account of the picture in the following remarkable terms:—"At the end of the passage on the left hand, is the picture of a man playing upon the harp, painted in fresco, and quite entire. He is clad in a habit made like a shirt, such as the women still wear in Abyssinia, and the men in Nubia. This seems to be white linen or muslin, with narrow stripes of red. It reaches down to his ancles; his feet are without sandals, and bare; his neck and arms are also bare; his loose wide sleeves are gathered above the elbows; his head is close shaved; he seems a corpulent man, and about fifty years of age, in colour, rather of the darkest for an Egyptian. To guess by the detail of the figure, the painter should have had about the same degree of merit with a good sign-painter in Europe; yet he has represented the action of the musician in a manner never to be mistaken. His left hand seems employed in the upper part of the instrument among the notes in *alto*, as if in an *arpeggio;* while, stooping forwards, he seems with his right hand to be beginning with the lowest string, and promising to ascend with the most rapid execution; this action so obviously rendered by an indifferent artist, shows that it was a common one in his time, or in other words, that great hands were then frequent, and consequently, that music was well understood, and diligently followed." Mr. Bruce then goes on, at greater length than is necessary for our purpose, to describe the construction of the instrument, and accompanies his description with a figure of the harp. According to his representation, it closely resembles the harp of the present day, and is as elegant

in form, and rich in ornament, as those which are seen in our drawing-rooms. Taken in proportion with the size of the performer, it must have been, according to Mr. Bruce, about six feet and a half in height, with thirteen strings, which must not only, from its size, have afforded powerful tones, but a scale of considerable extent. Mr. Bruce concludes his letter with the following observations:—"This harp overturns all the accounts of the earliest state of ancient music and instruments in Egypt; and is altogether, in its form, ornaments, and compass, an incontestable proof, stronger than a thousand Greek quotations, that geometry, drawing, mechanics, and music, were at the greatest perfection when the harp was made, and that what we think, in Egypt, was the invention of arts, was only the beginning of the era of their restoration."

In the same letter, Mr. Bruce mentions another ancient harp, which is represented on a *basso-relievo* at Ptolemais, a city built by Ptolemy Philadelphus. It has fifteen strings; from which circumstance, and from there being no harp with so many strings found in any remains of Grecian sculpture, Mr. Bruce concludes that it, like the other, is Egyptian;—a conclusion which is strengthened by the place where its representation was found.

Whatever was the splendour of the Egyptian monarchy, and the state of the arts and sciences among the people, in ages of which nothing is known, it appears that this splendour had decayed, and those arts and sciences had been lost, before any Grecian author, whose writings are extant, had acquired any personal knowledge of that country. The earliest Greek writers

who describe the Pyramids, and other monuments of antiquity, seem to have been as ignorant of their history and origin, as we are at this day; and everything that they say conveys the impression of a country full of the wrecks of a more elevated state of society. Though, therefore, the Greeks admit that, in the earlier periods of their own history, they borrowed largely from the arts and sciences of the Egyptians, it is probable that, even in that remote period, the decay of Egypt had begun, and that there no longer existed that music, and those instruments, which they had formerly possessed. Egypt, during the whole period of its authentic history, was in a state of gradual decline; till at last, under the dominion of Alexander the Great, its arts and sciences, and even its language, were Grecian;—thus receiving back from the Greeks, a portion of that which, in the days of its own glory, it had bestowed upon them.

The Greeks are the people of antiquity, whose music has attracted the largest share of attention among the moderns. During the whole period of their history, they considered music as an art of great dignity and importance, and cultivated it with the utmost assiduity. Its practice formed an essential part of education among the higher ranks, to whom, indeed, it was in a great measure confined; and its theory occupied the attention of the most distinguished men of science, several of whose writings on the subject are still extant.

It might, therefore, have been expected that our knowledge of Grecian music should be considerable. But in truth it is quite the reverse; and neither the contents of the ancient writings, nor the multifarious researches and speculations of modern inquirers, give us

any idea of what the Greek music really was. Nor is this so surprising as it would at first appear. The music of a country can be handed down to a remote posterity only by the preservation of actual compositions, by means of a notation which is not merely adequate to express the sounds with distinctness, but continues to be intelligible. Now, all that remains of this music consists of two or three small fragments, expressed by a notation, the manner of interpreting which is far from being fully understood.

As to the scientific treatises which we still possess, though they profess to be on the subject of music, yet (with very slight exceptions) they have little to do with it as a practical art. They are, in fact, treatises on that branch of Natural Philosophy, which is termed acoustics; and are calculated to throw no more light on the art of music as then practised, than could be gained at the present day, from the *Harmonics* of Smith, or the *Acoustics* of Chladni,—works, which, in their objects, correspond precisely to the musical writings of Aristoxenus and Euclid. The object of these writers, both ancient and modern, is to obtain an accurate division of the intervals of the scale by means of calculations, deduced from the vibrations of sonorous bodies; and the only result from these calculations, which can at all be beneficial to practical music, may be a more perfect method of tuning certain instruments. But the modern writings in which these descriptions are found, do not contain a syllable, which in after-times would give the slightest idea of the music which is now practised among us; and precisely similar is the case with the writings of antiquity. Some treatises, indeed, there

are, which are somewhat of a practical nature; explaining the mode of notation, and even giving something like rules for composition; but the want of a body of music, by which these rules might be illustrated, renders them now unintelligible and useless. All that we learn from these writings, and from the attempts of modern commentators, is, that we know next to nothing of the matter, in so far as the value of the Greek music is concerned; though we obtain a good deal of information respecting the extent to which its practice was carried, and its influence on society and manners.

The poems of Homer are full of allusions to music, which he represents as having been in constant use at the time of the Trojan war. At that period, the music of voices, accompanied by the lyre and the flute, is described as being always employed, not only on public, solemn, and festive occasions, but also as a favourite amusement of private life. Banquets, sacrifices, and processions, were accompanied by minstrels, whose function it was to rouse the feelings by singing appropriate poetry. Achilles, when, in resentment for the loss of his mistress, he is visited during his retirement by his friends, deputed to persuade him to return to the army, is found in his tent, soothing his irritated feelings by singing and playing on the harp. And Paris is upbraided by Hector, for the effeminacy of his character, "his curling tresses, and his silver lyre." Homer seems to have been peculiarly sensible of the charms of music, of which, and its effects, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* contain many exquisite descriptions. In the rapturous language which he employs on the subject, and the variety of his beautiful allusions to it, he, more nearly

than any other poet, approaches our Shakspeare; who, however, as the eulogist of music, stands unrivalled.

The principal musical instruments among the Greeks (the only ones, indeed, on which musicians of eminence thought it worthy to perform) were the lyre and the flute. For the former instrument there were different terms, which, in modern languages, have been translated sometimes by the word *lyre*, and sometimes *harp*. The flute, though it was held in high estimation, has not been described in such terms as to give us a distinct idea of its powers. It seems to have been brought to a high degree of improvement, as it was the instrument used by the most esteemed public performers, some of whom are said to have paid for a flute sums equal to five hundred pounds sterling.

In the time of Homer, the lyre appears to have had only four strings; from which circumstance, and its small size, it must have been an instrument of very feeble powers. Between the time of Homer and that of Terpander, who is supposed to have flourished between six and seven hundred years before the Christian era, the number of strings was increased to seven. An eighth string, completing the octave, was added by Pythagoras, about a hundred and fifty years after Terpander.—Successive additions continued to be made.—Euclid speaks of the lyre having ten strings. Timotheus, whose name has acquired a modern celebrity, from Dryden's *Alexander's Feast*, appears to have increased the number to eleven; for which enormity he was condemned by the Spartan senate to have the additional strings of his lyre cut off, and to be banished from the

city*. In this document he is accused of having corrupted the ears of youth by encroaching on the simplicity of the seven-stringed lyre; from which it would appear that, whatever may have been the case elsewhere, it had, till this time, remained in that state at Sparta. Plutarch speaks of a lyre of twelve strings; which number it never seems to have exceeded.

The musical scale of the Greeks, reached, at its greatest extent, to two octaves. It precisely resembled the scale of the moderns in the disposition of its intervals, and consequently, in the kind of melody which it was calculated to produce. But, in place of being arranged by octaves, as with us, it was arranged into *tetrachords*, or groups of four notes each. The Greek music, too, like the modern, had its three genera;—the *diatonic*, or natural scale, of which the greatest part of melody consists,—the *chromatic*, in which the sounds of the natural scale are artificially divided by semitones; and the *enharmonic*, in which this division is made into quarter-tones. There were a variety of *modes*, similar to the variety of keys in modern music. These modes were distinguished by the names of different districts, as the Dorian, Lydian, Phrygian, &c., and are described as acting differently on the feelings; the Lydian being soft and soothing, the Phrygian bold and warlike, &c. These differences could not have, we think, arisen from the difference in

* Our fashionable piano-forte players, by the inordinate use they make of the shrill, tinkling notes which have been recently added to the top of the instrument, sometimes make us think that such an edict against them would not be a bad thing at present.

the pitch, which is said to be the circumstance that distinguished the different modes, like the modern *keys*. A modern air preserves the same expression whether it is sung in a higher or lower key. There must have been, we apprehend, some diversity of rhythm, or some peculiarity in the mode of performance, belonging to each mode, of which we have no explanation.

It is generally supposed that the Greeks had no musical rhythm, except that which regulated their poetry, so that the length of the notes, and the different kinds of musical feet, in their airs, were regulated entirely by the quantities of the syllables, and the feet of the poetry to which they were united.

The Greek system of musical notation was excessively complicated; and, as might be expected, is imperfectly understood, notwithstanding the research and ingenuity which have been bestowed on the subject. The letters of the alphabet formed the basis of this notation, and were multiplied by distortions and mutilations of their forms,—by accents, and arbitrary marks, producing above sixteen hundred signs or characters, to learn and acquire the use of which, we are informed by the Greek writers, cost the labour of several years.

A few fragments of ancient Greek music are still in existence. Three hymns—to Apollo, Calliope, and Nemesis—have been discovered in three different ancient manuscripts, and in circumstances which leave no doubt as to their being genuine. They have been published by different antiquaries, and the copies are found, on the whole, to correspond. Dr. Burney has given them, with an interpretation, in modern notes, resulting not only from his own labours, but those of

the former publishers of them. It is unfortunate, however, that the result does not repay the labour that has been bestowed on these relics of antiquity; for the music, as rendered in modern notes, is a mere jargon, from which we conceive that no conclusion of any kind can be drawn. The sounds are as barbarous as those of the rudest savages. We cannot believe that they are such as afforded pleasure to the most elegant and refined people of antiquity; and we are the more ready to withhold our belief, when we consider how uncertain it is whether the ancient notes are properly interpreted.

Burney gives a fourth specimen of Greek music, consisting of part of an ode of Pindar, with musical notes, but of somewhat doubtful authority. This has a little more of the semblance of music than the other specimens, the sounds having some degree of connexion, and not being offensive to the ear. Dr. Burney has furnished it with a modern dress, by reducing it to regular measure and putting a bass to it; in which guise it has somewhat the effect of a modern church chant. But these fragments cannot in the least assist us in forming an idea of the character of the Grecian music; for, even supposing them all to be not only genuine, but correctly rendered into modern notes, there may have been conventional rules and methods of performance, (as is the case among ourselves,) not expressed by the notation, of which we cannot have any notion, and which may have rendered the effect of the music totally different from that which is conveyed to us by the modern notes. Besides, these fragments probably were meant to be recited, or chanted, by a

great number of people in chorus, and, if so, could no more give us a general idea of Greek music, than two or three of our psalm tunes could enable our posterity, three thousand years hence, to draw conclusions as to the music of England in the nineteenth century.

The question, whether the Greeks possessed a knowledge of what is called "harmony," or the pleasure produced by the combination of different sounds, heard at the same time, has undergone a great deal of discussion. A view of the arguments on each side would be inconsistent with the plan of a popular work. We are inclined, however, to think that the question has been decided in the negative, for two reasons. In the first place, no indication of the effects of harmonious combinations is to be found in the Greek writers. They use the word "harmony," indeed, but not in the modern musical sense. Its meaning in music is defined by Suidas to be "a *well-ordered succession*," or, in other words, *melody;* and ancient treatises professing, in their titles, to be "On Harmony," do not contain a word relating to harmony in its modern acceptation. Even in modern popular language harmony is used for melody. Addison speaks of an harmonious voice. In the second place, the Greeks treated as discords those combinations which are now considered most agreeable and essential in harmony, a fact which alone seems sufficient to decide the question in the negative.

Music was held in the highest estimation among the Greeks, during the whole period of their history. To excel in it was considered as an accomplishment fitting the highest rank and gravest character; and it was

reputed a powerful agent in forming the mind of youth, and in rousing the feelings of courage and patriotism. The celebrated Tyrtæus was not only a warrior, but a poet and a musician. The Spartans paid him the greatest honours; and it was their practice, that the soldiers, before going on a military expedition, were summoned to the king's tent, to listen to his warlike songs. The ancient writers are full of the effects of music on the passions. Plutarch relates that Terpander, by means of his music, appeased a violent sedition among the Spartans; and that Solon, merely by singing a poem of his own composition, persuaded the Athenians to renew an unsuccessful war which they had given up in despair. Thucydides says, that when the Lacedemonians went into battle, it was the practice to play soft music for the purpose of preventing their courage from becoming too impetuous; but that, on one occasion, when the day was going against them, Tyrtæus who was acting the part of a musician, quitted the soft Lydian mode, and began to play in the Phrygian, which so re-animated the retiring troops, that they returned to the charge and gained the victory. Dryden's inimitable description of the effects of the lyre of Timotheus on the mind of Alexander, is founded on incidents in the history of that hero. Plutarch mentions that when the celebrated flute-player Antigenides played a martial air before Alexander, that monarch became so inflamed that he sprang from the table, and seized his arms; and his rushing from the banquet, with a torch in his hand, to destroy the conquered capital of Persia, was a circumstance which really happened. The celebrated painter, Theon, when

about to exhibit a picture on a martial subject, made a musician sound a charge on the trumpet before withdrawing the curtain; an exquisite piece of foppery, according to our ideas, but it is described as producing the intended effect.

The lyrists and flute-players of antiquity received rewards for their public performances more than equal to the most extravagant salaries now given to Italian opera-singers, and were, consequently, equally splendid and luxurious in their way of life. Amabæus, the harper, whenever he sang on the stage, was paid an attic talent (nearly two hundred pounds of our present money,) for his performance; and Xenophon, in the following passage, gives a striking picture of the manners of those performers. "If," he says, "a bad performer on the flute wishes to pass for a good one, how must he set about it? He must imitate the great flute-players in all those circumstances that are extraneous to the art itself; and, principally, as they are remarkable for spending great sums in rich furniture, and for appearing in public with a great number of servants, he must do the same." Human nature is the same in all ages; there are few modern arts or professions, in which the same method of gaining distinction is not resorted to.

The powerful influence of the Greek music on the passions and feelings, argues nothing in favour of its intrinsic excellence. We find that a Highland pibroch, played on the bagpipe, is as strong an incitement to courage in the day of battle as the strains of Tyrtæus. The great moral agency of the songs of Dibdin, in inspiring our sailors not only with courage, but with

manly and generous sentiments, must be ascribed much more to the verses than to the airs; and the political influence of music is of the same kind. It was the vigorous poetry, for instance, of the celebrated Marseillois hymn, acting on minds already excited by the events of a momentous crisis, that enabled it to rouse the population of France to an enthusiasm which rose to phrensy; and then the music, by itself, could produce a similar effect, by its association with the poetry and with the circumstances of the time. The song of the Marseillois was heard in France a thousand times, after the fever of the first revolution was over, with no other feeling than that of the admiration (with some small degree of excitement) which spirited poetry and music always produce: but no sooner did a new revolution break out, than the similarity of the crisis awoke all the old associations connected with this song; and then, as before, it resounded in every quarter, raising the feelings of the multitude from ardour to enthusiasm and even fury. Such, no doubt, was the manner in which the patriotic songs of antiquity produced the great effects ascribed to them. As to the effect of music merely instrumental in battle, it must be ascribed, partly at least, to some direct influence which seems to be possessed by certain sounds. The clangour of the trumpet has, in itself, something rousing and warlike; and the "spirit-stirring" quality of the drum, especially when combined with

The pomp and circumstance of glorious war,

is universally felt. Mr. Bruce, after describing an Abyssinian trumpet, says, "This trumpet sounds only one note, E, in a loud, hoarse, and terrible tone. It is

played slow when on a march, or where no enemy appears in sight; but afterwards it is repeated very quick, and with great violence, and has the effect on the Abyssinian soldiers, of transporting them absolutely to fury and madness, and of making them so regardless of life as to throw themselves in the middle of the enemy, which they do with great gallantry. I have often in time of peace, tried what effect this charge would have upon them, and found that none who heard it could continue seated, but that all rose up and continued the whole time in motion." This is an exact description of the effect of the bagpipe on the Scottish Highlanders.

While we do not believe that the effects of the Greek music were produced by any peculiar qualities unknown to the music of modern times, neither are we inclined to agree with those who, forming an estimate of it from the fragments which survive, and arguing from its want of harmony, suppose it to have been rude and inartificial. These surviving fragments, as we have already said, hardly afford room for conclusions of any kind; and there can be no doubt that the practice of melody might be carried to a high pitch of refinement without any aid from harmony. Even in modern times, the sweet and expressive tones of a melodious voice, without any accompaniment, afford the utmost delight. It is impossible to believe that an art, cultivated for a series of ages among a people so ingenious and refined as the Greeks, could have remained in a barbarous state. As we have already remarked, the elements of music exist originally in the human mind; all mankind being not only gifted with

a sensibility to musical sounds, but so formed as to be pleased with sounds belonging to a scale or series, which is found in every part of the world. The Greeks, therefore, must have had a national music, corresponding in its qualities to the character of the people and their language; and this species of music, understood and enjoyed by the great mass of the population, must have been that on which the more artificial music was founded. Dr. Burney has shown, that the oldest music of the Greeks, of which any account can be given, was founded on a scale corresponding precisely with the scale of the Scottish music—a circumstance which we should, at any rate, have concluded to have been the case, from the general considerations we have stated: and it is surely absurd to suppose, that, while the inhabitants of the mountains and the plains possessed melodies dictated by Nature herself, the more refined inhabitants of the cities could listen to such barbarous jargon as the hymns to Apollo and Nemesis are supposed to have consisted of.

The most artificial melodies of modern times are perfectly congenial in character to the national music of the different countries of Europe. Examine a song of Rossini, the most florid of modern composers, and it will be found that its subject, or the strain that forms its ground-work, resembles entirely the popular airs of his country; and this is equally the case with the airs of Mozart and Weber. The resources of modern art have greatly enlarged the bounds of melody, and bestowed upon it many graces and embellishments—frequently too many—but its *substratum* is always found to consist of the most agreeable strains of popular music.

The Greek authors tell us that the bulk of their music was in the *diatonic* genus, because this species of music was understood by everybody; the other genera being practised only by professors of the art. This corresponds exactly with the state of music in modern times. The ancient diatonic scale was capable of producing exactly the same species of melody with the similar scale of the moderns, in which the great bulk of our music, also, is composed; because it is intelligible to every person, learned or not, who is possessed of any sensibility to music. It is probable, therefore, that this species of music, among the Greeks, like that of the moderns, consisted of the elementary strains of their national airs, refined and expanded by the taste and skill of their musicians: and when we consider the pains bestowed on its cultivation by men of the highest eminence, and the universal delight which it gave to the most accomplished and intellectual portion of the Grecian people, there seems little reason to doubt that this music was not only formed out of those elements which are furnished by nature, but that it was carried to a very high degree of excellence as an art.

The state of music among the Romans requires little particular notice. They no doubt had a national music peculiar to themselves; but their music, as an art, was entirely borrowed from the Greeks. During the days of the Roman empire its cultivation seems to have been carried to excess; and the passion for it which was exhibited by Nero would be a proof that a love for the arts is consistent with the most abominable depravity were it not pretty clear that he was actuated, like

many modern amateurs, by vanity more than a love of music. The means he took to preserve and improve his voice were, of course, such as were ordinarily practised by the singers of his time. He lay on his back with a leaden plate on his stomach; took strong medicines, and abstained from various kinds of food which were supposed to hurt the voice. He gave up making harangues to the senate and the soldiery, from the fear of injuring his voice, which he cherished for the more important employment of singing in the theatre. After all, he was most probably an execrable performer; and it was by the influence of compulsion and terror that he procured attention and applause. He is said to have kept up an establishment of five thousand singers and players on instruments. When about to put himself to death, he cried, "What a pity it is to kill so good a musician!"

Soon after this period music began to decline in the Roman empire. The music of the Greeks, with the use of their instruments, sank into oblivion; and the slight knowledge of it which we now possess is gleaned entirely from the few ancient Greek treatises on the subject which survived the dark ages.

CHAPTER II.

THE PROGRESS OF MUSIC DURING THE MIDDLE AGES, AND DOWN TO THE END OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.—MUSIC OF THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIAN CHURCHES.—GREGORY THE GREAT.—NOTATION.—THE ORGAN.—INVENTION OF COUNTERPOINT.—THE TROUBADOURS.—POPULAR MUSIC.—PALESTRINA.—SACRED MUSIC IN ENGLAND.—PSALMODY.—MADRIGALS.—MUSIC IN GERMANY AND FRANCE.

Music was employed from the earliest ages of the Christian church, in its religious service. What the music of the first Christians was, can only be matter of conjecture. But it may be supposed to have been similar to that which had formerly been used in the different countries where they dwelt. In Judea, the religious chants formerly used in the Jewish worship would still be used; and in other parts of the Roman empire, the new Christians would have recourse to the Pagan hymns of the Greeks and Romans. That the music of the Christian church was partly, at least, borrowed from the Greeks, appears from the circumstance, that, when St. Ambrose, about the end of the fourth century, digested this music into a regular system, and established what has been called the Ambrosian chant, the nomenclature he adopted was entirely Greek. The different modes, or scales, on which this chant was constructed, were distinguished by the Greek names of Dorian, Phrygian, &c.

The learned Padre Martini was of opinion, that the ecclesiastical chants of the primitive Christian Church were as old as the time of King David. "In the reign

of King David," he says, in his *Storia della Musica*, "music had a regular establishment in the worship of the sanctuary. The nature of their songs is unknown, but it may be believed that they regulated the various tones or modes according to the various affections, marking the path which was afterwards followed by the restorers of the ecclesiastical song, who made the intervals serve as fundamentals in the change of the tones. I am also of opinion that the pure diatonic scale was in use in the Temple as the most natural and easy, and the most worthy of the majesty of so venerable a place. The Hebrew instruments were not adapted to follow the variations of the chromatic and enharmonic intervals. It also appears probable that some of the chants, which were there practised, are the same with, or differ but little from, those still sung in the ecclesiastical *canto fermo*. The Hebrew music of the psalmody, from the time of David, appears to have been transmitted from father to son till the middle of the first century of the Church. The Apostles who were accustomed to frequent the Temple, most probably used the chant in which the people replied to the Levites; and as the heads of the Hebrew faith were so bigotted to the preservation of their religious forms, these psalms were doubtless the same as those of David." Padre Martini then says, on the authority of St. Augustine, that it appears from various writings of the Apostles and fathers of the Church, that unisonous song was in use throughout the Catholic Church in the second, third, fourth, and fifth centuries, and that it was introduced and ordained by the Apostles; and concludes, that "from these premises it would seem that the

chants now used in the Roman Catholic Church were introduced by the Apostles, and came originally from David; and the chant of the psalmody, called by the fathers of the first century unisonous or consonant, was the same as that called by us *canto fermo*, or Gregorian." Martini has given, in the same work, a number of the chants sung in the synagogues of different parts of Europe, which, considering the tenacity with which the Jews adhere to the rites and observances of their religion, may not unreasonably be looked upon as remnants of the ancient religious music of that people. These chants are simple, grave, and solemn; and their resemblance to the Gregorian chants of the Roman Catholic Church is sufficient to induce the belief that the ancient Jewish chants were adopted by the primitive Christians.

About the end of the sixth century, the celebrated pope Gregory the Great improved and extended the limits of the ecclesiastical chant; and threw it into that form which, in the Catholic church, is retained at this day. Parts of the Catholic liturgy are still chanted, or recited, in a kind of melody, composed strictly according to the laws of the Gregorian chant; and with an effect wonderfully grave and noble, arising, partly from the simplicity of the strain, and its total dissimilarity to any of the music that is used on lighter occasions, and partly from the associations connected, as in the case of Gothic architecture, with its venerable antiquity. Of this character of the Gregorian chant our modern composers are so well aware, that they often employ it, on particular occasions, to heighten the effect of their sacred music. The music of these Gregorian chants,

in the Catholic missals, is written in those ancient square characters which are usually called Gregorian notes; a [term which has led to the supposition that Gregory was the inventor of these notes. This, however is not the case. Gregory, indeed, made the very important step of applying the first seven Roman letters to the sounds of the octave, as is done to this day; but the Gregorian notes were not invented till many centuries after his death.

About the middle of the fourth century, regular choirs were introduced into the churches. These were divided into two parts, and made to sing alternately, or responsively. This was called *antiphonal* singing, out of which the modern *fugue* has arisen. In this species of music, a certain phrase of melody, after having been sung by one portion of the choristers, is echoed by the others, at certain distances, and at a higher or lower pitch; and the successive accumulation of these different masses of sound, into one grand and harmonious whole, produces the greatest effects of which music is capable. Of such effects, the most sublime instances are to be found in the chorusses of Handel.

The progress of musical notation from the time of Gregory the Great, may be traced in a few words. Gregory's method was the very simple one of writing the words, and then placing above each syllable the letter indicating the note to which it was to be sung. Several clumsy expedients were then adopted, of writing the words on parallel lines, placing each word on a higher or lower line according to the comparative height of the sound. The rudiments of the present system are to be observed in the method adopted about the ninth

or tenth century, of drawing seven parallel lines, and expressing the notes by *points* placed on these lines. At last, the celebrated Guido d'Arezzo reduced the number of lines to four, and placed points not only on the lines, but in the spaces between them. This is the notation of the present day, in so far, at least, as the pitch of the notes is concerned; with this difference, that it has been found convenient to use five lines in place of four.

Down to this period, musical notes being used only to express the simple sounds of the chants of the church, the length of which sounds was regulated by that of the syllables to which they were sung, there was no occasion for any device for expressing the relative duration of musical sounds. But, when *harmony* came to be discovered, and music was written, consisting of different notes to be sung at the same time, it became necessary to mark the relative length of the notes, in order to keep the singers together. This was necessary even in the simplest kind of harmony, where, as in our psalm-tunes, all the singers had notes of equal length: and it became more and more indispensable when the harmony became more complex, and when a long note, in one part, was accompanied by two or more shorter ones, in another. In the rhythmical music of modern times, it is impossible to write down the simplest tune without determining precisely the relative length of each note. Marks for the length of notes seem to have been invented immediately after the time of Guido; and were first reduced to a regular and systematic form by Franco of Cologne, in a work which is still extant, intituled *Franconis Musica et Cantus Mensurabilis.*

Franco's system, though its details have been extended and improved, remains to the present day, and is simply this; that a note, written in a certain form is to be considered as of twice or thrice the length of a note marked by another form. Guido and Franco of Cologne, therefore, may be held as the authors of musical notation; the subsequent changes being merely modifications of their inventions, rendered necessary by the improvements in music.

The ORGAN is an instrument of great antiquity. The period of its invention is not clearly ascertained; but it appears to be established that an organ formed a present to king Pepin of France from the Greek emperor Constantine, in 757. During the tenth century the use of the organ became general in Germany, Italy, and England.

The organ, however, of those times, differed very greatly from the instrument of our day. Du Cange has preserved a curious description of it in the following barbarous verses written by Wolstan, a monk, in the tenth century, and descriptive of an organ erected by St. Elphegus, bishop of Winchester, in the cathedral of that city.

Bisseni supra sociantur ordine folles,
Inferiusque jacent quatuor atque decem,
Quas agitant validi septuaginta viri;
Brachia versantes, multo et sudore madentes,
Certatimque suos quisque movet socios.
Viribus ut totis impellant flamina sursum,
Et rugiat plena capsa referta sinu
Sola quadringentas, quæ sustinet ordine, Musas.

We find the following homely translation of these verses in Mason's *Essay on Church Music.*

> Twelve pair of bellows, ranged in stately row,
> Are joined above, and fourteen more below;
> These the full force of seventy men require,
> Who ceaseless toil, and plenteously perspire;
> Each aiding each, till all the winds be prest
> In the close confines of the incumbent chest,
> On which four hundred pipes in order rise
> To bellow forth the blast that chest supplies.

An instrument that required *seventy* stout bellows-blowers must have been of enormous size, however clumsily constructed. It has been conjectured, and with apparent probability, that these men did not continue to blow during the time of the performance, but laid in a stock of wind which was gradually expended as the organist played. In a work intituled *L'art du facture des Orgues*, by D. Bedoes de Celles, a Benedictine monk, published in 1766, we are told that the organ-keys were at first five or six inches broad, and must have been played upon, like carillons, by blows of the fist. We learn from the same author that the half-notes were introduced at Venice at the beginning of the twelfth century; that the compass of the instrument did not then exceed two octaves; and that registers, by which a variety of stops could be formed, were not invented till the conclusion of the sixteenth century. From these circumstances we may concur in Mr. Mason's opinion, that an organ, in any degree deserving the name, could not have been fabricated many years before the era of our Reformation.

To the introduction of this noble instrument, however, notwithstanding the rudeness of its construction, may be ascribed the invention of harmony. From its being played with keys, the production of simultaneous

sounds became easy, and the beautiful effects of the union of concordant sounds must soon have been felt. Accordingly, it was soon after the organ began to be used, that the first attempts at harmony seem to have been made. These were rude and meagre; and many of the combinations which continued for some time in use would be shocking to modern ears. But, when this new mine of musical beauties was once opened, it was diligently wrought by an unbroken succession of eminent men, who threw away the rubbish which was gathered at first, and gradually purified the ore, till the commencement of the eighteenth century, when harmony may be said to have reached its greatest refinement. Among these improvers of harmony, the most distinguished are, FRANCO of Cologne, whom we have already mentioned, MARCHETTO of Padua, JOHN DE MURIS, JOHN OKENHEIM, JOSQUIN DES PRES, and CLAUDIO MONTEVERDE. Each of these individuals went far beyond the age in which he lived, and discovered combinations, which, considered with reference to the existing state of music, are wonderful. Monteverde, in particular, who lived in Italy in the sixteenth century, had the courage to violate almost all the subsisting rules of counterpoint, and roused, by his heresies, the most violent indignation among the orthodox musicians. By degrees, however, his licenses were adopted; and they were so very daring, that they have scarcely become old even at the present day, but continue to afford composers some of the most beautiful resources in harmony.

During the great efforts that were made for the improvement of music, prior to the sixteenth century,

harmony alone was the object of attention, to the utter neglect of melody. The object in view then was, the discovery of new combinations, and of ingenious contrivances for putting together a number of parts; but it was never considered necessary that any of those parts should form a graceful or agreeable song. In those days melody existed, as it must have done at all times; but, being despised by the great and learned, it took refuge among the humble and ignorant. Melody, in short, then consisted entirely of the national airs, sung by the rustic and uneducated inhabitants of different countries.

The oldest specimens of Melody which seem to be preserved, are some of the songs of the Provençal Minstrels, or Troubadours. The Provençal language, (a sort of corrupted Latin, partaking a good deal of both the Italian and French), and poetry flourished chiefly about the twelfth century. The professors of the *Joyeuse Science*, as it was called, were *Troubadours*, or bards; *Violars*, or performers on the viol; *Juglars*, or flute-players; and *Musars*, or players on instruments in general; and sometimes, of course, these different characters were united in the same person. These poets and musicians enjoyed the highest favour among the great and the fair; and the greatest themselves did not disdain to seek fame in those capacities. Our Richard the First sought to rival his faithful servant Blondel, the most accomplished minstrel of his time, no less than his great enemy Saladin. The romantic, but authentic incident of his deliverance from the *Tour Ténébreuse*, in which he had been treacherously immured on his return from the Holy Land by the

Duke of Austria, is thus related in an old French Chronicle.

"King Richard had retained in his service a minstrel or bard, whose name was Blondel. The bard, missing his master, found the account well verified of the king's departure from the Holy Land, but met with none that could tell with certainty whither he was gone, and therefore wandered over many countries to try whether he could find him. It happened, after a considerable time thus spent, that Blondel came to a castle near the city where his master was confined, and asking his host to whom it belonged, was told that it was one of the fortresses of the Duke of Austria. Blondel then inquired whether there were any prisoners in it, and was assured that there was one prisoner who had been there more than a year, but that he was not able to tell who he was. Blondel, having received this information, made use of the general reception which minstrels find, to make acquaintance in the castle; but, though he was admitted, could never obtain a sight of the prisoner; till one day he placed himself over against a window of the tower in which King Richard was kept, and began to sing a French song which they had formerly composed together. When the king heard the song, he knew that the singer was Blondel, and when half of it was sung, he began the other half, and completed it. Blondel, then knowing the residence and condition of the king, his master, went back to England, and related his adventure to the English barons."

A lay, or song of complaint, written by our romantic monarch during this captivity, is preserved in Wal-

pole's Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors, and has received an English translation from Burney. It has considerable beauty. The music has not been preserved of either of these songs; but the reader will find in Burney, and also in De la Borde's *History of Music*, several melodies of the same period. One of these is by Anselm Faidit, a Troubadour who accompanied Richard, by whom he was much esteemed, to the Holy War. This person had a romantic history. He seduced from a convent a beautiful nun, whom he married, and, escaping from the consequences of a crime which was usually visited with a terrible punishment, he travelled about, on foot, for many years, with his wife, who was as much admired for her charms, as for the beauty with which she sang her husband's verses. On the death of his royal friend and patron, Faidit composed a monody, which has a good deal of pathos in the poetry, and an air by no means destitute of expression.

Some French songs and melodies, coeval with those of the Troubadours, have been preserved. Among these, are the celebrated songs of the Châtelain de Coucy, whose tragical story has been the foundation of so much poetry and romance. He lived in the times of Philip Augustus, and Richard; and took the cross, and went to the Holy Land, in consequence of an unhappy love for the Lady of Fayel, by whom his passion was returned, though in innocence and honour. Having received a mortal wound in Palestine, he entreated his squire to carry to the lady of his love the token he had received from her on his departure, with his heart enclosed in a casket, and a letter containing

his last farewell. The squire was intercepted by the jealous lord of Fayel, who compelled him to deliver up the casket and letter. The enraged husband ordered the heart to be dressed, and served up in a disguised form, before his wife at dinner. After dinner he asked her if she knew what she had been eating, and on her answering No, told her she had dined on the heart of her lover;—at the same time producing the fatal letter and casket. When she had perused the letter, her countenance changed, and after a pause she said, "It is true, indeed, that you have served me to a viand I dearly loved; but it is the last I shall ever eat, as all other food would now be tasteless to me." She then retired to her chamber, and, refusing all sustenance, speedily fell a victim to her grief. "The unhappy De Coucy," says Burney, "no less distinguished for his misfortunes than talents, has left behind him some of the most elegant and affecting songs in the French language, which have been preserved in manuscripts that are near 450 years old, and cited by all contemporary authors, as models on the subject of love." Burney has selected two of the most pleasing of these; but the whole of them are to be found in the work of De la Borde, and are certainly very beautiful specimens of old French poetry. The music partakes of the rude state of the art in those early days, but has gleams of feeling that are not to be found in the elaborate compositions of the learned, for ages afterwards.

Very old specimens of French melody are also to be found in the songs of Thibaut, King of Navarre, who lived in the earlier part of the thirteenth century. The chroniclers tell us that this prince, having conceived

a violent and hopeless passion for Queen Blanche, was advised to seek a solace in the pursuit of music and poetry. It is the opinion of the French antiquaries, that the airs of the King of Navarre's songs are his own, as well as the words, and they are thus very curious and valuable, as remains of French melody at that early period. Two of them are given by Burney, and approach nearly to the French popular airs of the present time. One of them, in particular, is precisely like a vaudeville in a modern French opera*.

No remains of Italian melody have been preserved prior to the sixteenth century. Long before that period, the Italians undoubtedly possessed a popular music, containing much of that grace and sweetness for which it is now so remarkable. But in Italy, as elsewhere, those who cultivated music scientifically, bestowed their attention wholly on harmony and the combination of parts, while the popular melodies were used by those who possessed musical feeling, but had not technical skill enough even to write them down. It appears from the writings of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, that music of this popular kind was much cultivated in their time. In Boccaccio's description of the party of ladies and gentlemen, who, during the plague of Florence, retired to a country-house to drive away the thoughts of the horrors in which their city and friends were involved, by a life of mirth and jollity,—of good cheer, music, and story-telling; the amusement of each day is finished by singing and dancing, and the songs are generally accompanied on the lute or viol. As all the party were able to sing and play, and as this did

* See BURNEY's *History of Music*, vol. ii. p. 300.

not seem to be considered as an accomplishment at all remarkable, it may be supposed that the songs, as well as the accompaniments, were of the simplest cast, but probably of the graceful kind, which are still so common among the uncultivated musicians of that country.

England had her full share of such music as was current in those distant times. We had our learned ecclesiastics, who cultivated the abstruse study of harmony as successfully as the musicians of the Continent, and have left some remains of their labours; and we had our popular music, which appears from our old poets (Chaucer, in particular, whose writings are full of allusions to music) to have been in very general use.

It was not till about the middle of the sixteenth century, that the popular airs of different countries began to attract the attention of musicians. It then came to be perceived that this kind of music had its beauties; and it soon became the practice of composers to collect these airs, to harmonize them, and introduce them in their compositions. The great beauty of the rustic and street tunes of the kingdom of Naples was the cause of their first receiving this distinction; and, to use Dr. Burney's language, these tunes "were as much in fashion all over Europe, during the sixteenth century, as Provençal songs were in preceding times, and Venetian ballads have been since." When it thus became the practice to borrow from the popular strains of different countries, their rhythmical movement, and natural flow of melody, and to apply to these the resources of harmony and scientific skill, the progress of music was rapid, and compositions began to appear which still continue to give pleasure.

During the sixteenth century, however, little or none of this species of music was yet produced. Italy gave birth to numerous composers of high reputation; but, though their names survive, their works, in general, have sunk into oblivion. Of the illustrious PALESTRINA, however, many fine compositions for the church are still extant. This great musician continues to stand at the head of ecclesiastical composers; and music in the church style is distinguished by being called "alla Palestrina." He was born in 1529, and died in 1594. His most celebrated composition is a mass, called *Missa Papæ Marcelli*, which is the admiration of musicians to this day. Of this production it has been related, that the above Pope, being offended at the absurd and unmeaning complication of sounds of which such compositions then consisted, determined to banish them altogether from the church; but that Palestrina, then a young man, entreated his Holiness to suspend the execution of his decree till he should have heard a mass of his composition; and that, this request being complied with, the Pope was so delighted with the grave and dignified simplicity of Palestrina's mass, that music was restored to the favour it had lost. This mass is always sung, on holy Saturday, in the Pope's chapel. It is in eight parts, but was reduced to six by Palestrina himself, with scarcely any diminution of effect. Palestrina was one of those gifted individuals, whose genius penetrates far beyond his own time; and his music has the appearance of being much more modern than anything that was composed for many years after his death. Another Italian composer of that century, whose music is still generally known, and

gives pleasure in the performance, is Luca Marenzio, a composer who brought that species of composition called the *Madrigal* to a degree of perfection which has never been surpassed.

The Netherlands, during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, produced a succession of great musicians, whose labours and discoveries contributed essentially to the progress of the art.

The founder of the Flemish school was JOSQUIN DES PRES, who has been justly called the father of modern harmony. He flourished in the latter part of the fifteenth century, and was *maestro di capella* to Louis XII. of France. Many of his works are still extant, consisting of masses and motets for the church, and secular songs. His harmony is ingenious and profound, full of combinations and contrivances previously unattempted; and the effect of his compositions is superior to that of any music prior to the age of Palestrina. Josquin was a man of shrewdness and humonr, of which many traits are related by old musical writers. It is said, for instance, that the king, in whose employment he was, having neglected to confer on him some benefice which he had promised, was reminded of his omission by hearing, in his chapel, a motet on the psalm beginning "*Memor esto verbi tui servo tuo;*" and that having, by this device, obtained the favour he looked for, Josquin thanked the king by another motet, on the words "*Bonitatem fecisti cum servo tuo, Domine.*" In the earlier part of the sixteenth century the works of Josquin were generally known and practised throughout Europe.

The Flemish school was supported by many able

successors of Josquin, the most eminent of whom were CYPRIAN RORE (or CIPRIANO DI RORE, as he is called by the Italian writers), and ORLANDO DE LASSO, who flourished at the same time, and were contemporary with Palestrina. Cipriano di Rore was born at Mechlin in 1516; and, after having been successively *maestro di capella* to the Duke of Ferrara, the republic of Venice, and the Duke of Parma, died at the court of that prince in 1565. Orlando de Lasso was born at Mono in 1520. He received his musical education in Italy, where he spent his youth. He afterwards returned to his own country, and resided at Antwerp; and finally became *maestro di capella* to the Duke of Bavaria, at Munich, where he lived many years, and died in 1593. His reputation was so great that the following epitaph (in the punning taste of the age) was made upon him:—"*Hic ille Orlandus Lassum qui recreat Orbem.*" These two great musicians introduced many novelties in harmony and modulation, which were adopted by their successors; and, in particular, were the first who hazarded what are now called *chromatic* passages, which they used with great freedom and boldness. Many of their works, consisting of masses and other compositions for the church, madrigals, and songs, are still extant.

During the sixteenth century, music made rapid progress in England. The names of Tye, Tallis, Bird, and Gibbons, will always be recorded in musical history among the fathers of ecclesiastical harmony.

CHRISTOPHER TYE was born in London, and educated in the Chapel Royal. He was musical preceptor to the children of Henry the Eighth. He was made a Doctor of Music, at Cambridge, in 1545. He afterwards was

appointed organist of the Chapel Royal, for which he produced almost the whole of his sacred compositions. These consisted of services and anthems, which were held in great esteem for many years after his death, but are no longer used in our churches. Tye is described by Anthony à Wood, as "a peevish, humoursome man, especially in his latter days; and sometimes," continues this amusing annalist, "playing on the organ in the chapel of Queen Elizabeth, what contained much music but little to delight the ear, she would send the verger to tell him that he played out of tune; whereupon he sent word that her ears were out of tune." An admirable specimen of his style, the anthem for four voices, "I will exalt thee, O Lord," is given in Dr. Boyce's *Collection of Cathedral Music.*

Thomas Tallis was born early in the reign of Henry the Eighth. Very little is known of the personal history of this illustrious musician. It appears, from the title of the noble collection of sacred music, the *Cantiones Sacræ*, published jointly by him and Bird, in 1575, that they were at that time gentlemen of Queen Elizabeth's private chapel, and also organists. They call themselves "*serenissimæ majestati à privato sacello generosi et organisti.*" This work was published at a time when the performance of the church service in Latin was no longer permitted; and it has been, therefore, supposed that the anthems and hymns which it contains, and which are in that language, were composed by Tallis and Bird, for the use of Queen Mary's Chapel, and at a time when they were of the Romish persuasion. After the accession of Elizabeth, however, Tallis appears to have embraced the reformed faith:

for he set to music the parts of the English Liturgy usually sung. He composed the Morning, Evening, and Communion Services, including the Litany and Responses; besides a great number of English anthems. These compositions have never yet been surpassed in learning, gravity, and pure devotional expression; and many parts of them are still made use of in our cathedrals, on the greatest and most solemn occasions.

One of the greatest musical curiosities extant is Tallis's celebrated *Song of Forty Parts*, which is thus described by Dr. Burney. "This wonderful effort of harmonical abilities is not divided into choirs of four parts, soprano, altus, tenor, and bass in each, like the compositions *a molti cori* of Benevoli and others; but consists of eight trebles placed under each other, eight mezzi soprani, or mean parts, eight counter-tenors, eight tenors, and eight basses, with one line allotted to the organ. All these several parts, as may be imagined, are not in simple counterpoint, or filled up in mere harmony, without meaning or design, but have each a share in the short subjects of fugue and imitation which are introduced upon every change of words. The first subject is begun in G by the first mezzo soprano or medius, and answered in D, the fifth above, by the first soprano; the second medius in like manner beginning in G, is answered in the octave below by the first tenor, and that by the first counter-tenor in D, the fifth above; then the first bass has the subject in D, the eighth below the counter-tenor; and thus all the forty *real* parts are severally introduced in the course of thirty-nine bars, when the vocal phalanx is employed at once, during six bars more. After which a new subject is led off by the

lowest bass, and pursued by other parts, severally, for about twenty-four bars, when there is another general chorus of all the parts; and thus this stupendous, though perhaps Gothic, specimen of human labour and intellect, is carried on in alternate flight, pursuit, attack, and choral union to the end; when the *polyphonic phenomenon* is terminated by twelve bars of universal chorus, in quadragesimal harmony." The performance of this gigantic composition, as may well be supposed, is a rare and extraordinary event. The present writer, however, had the gratification of assisting in its performance at the anniversary meeting of the Madrigal Society, in Freemasons' Hall, on the 21st day of January, 1836, when it was sung, without any instrumental accompaniment, by about one hundred and twenty persons. The singers were divided into eight choirs of five parts each, and with three or four voices to each part; each choir being under a leader, who took the time from the general conductor of the whole. The choirs were arranged along three sides of the hall. In consequence of these arrangements, and of the surprising steadiness of the singers, the conception of the composer was satisfactorily realized. The effect of the different subjects, as they were taken up and answered by the different choirs, rolling round the room, and swelling into rich harmony in one place as they died away in another, was as novel as it was beautiful; and the full tide of sound, in the general chorus at the conclusion, was exceedingly grand. This, doubtless, was the only performance of Tallis's "Song of Forty Parts," within the memory of any living musician; and it was accordingly recorded in the books of the Society; many of the persons present inscribing their names in the

record. To his account of this composition, Burney adds the following remark: "If ever any other compositions than those of Handel were to be performed in Westminster Abbey during the stupendous annual congress of musicians, it seems as if this, and others of Tallis, Bird, Gibbons, and Purcell, should have the advantage of such a correct and numerous choral band." We entirely agree in this remark, which, *mutatis mutandis*, is still more applicable to the present time than to that in which it was made, in consequence of the great and rapid progress which vocal harmony is now making in England.

Tallis died in 1585, and was buried in the old parish church of Greenwich. His epitaph, engraved on a brass plate in the chancel of that church, and preserved by Strype, is remarkable for its quaint simplicity, as well as the pleasing view it gives of the character of this venerable musician.

Enterred here doth ly a worthy wyght,
Who for long tyme in musick bore the bell:
His name to shew was Thomas Tallis hyght,
In honest vertuous lyff he did excell.

He serv'd long tyme in chappel with grete prayse,
Fower Sovereygnes' reygnes (a thing not often seene);
I mean King Henry and Prynce Edward's dayes,
Quene Marie, and Elizabeth our Quene.

He maryed was, though children he had none,
And lyv'd in love full three and thirty yeres,
With loyal spowse, whose name yclept was Jone,
Who here entomb'd, hym company now beares.

As he dyd lyve, so also dyd he dy,
In myld and quyet sort, O happy man!
To God ful oft for mercy dyd he cry,
Wherefore he lyves, let Deth do what he can.

Of the life of WILLIAM BIRD, little more is known than that he is supposed to have been born about the year 1543; that he was the scholar and friend of Tallis; and that he died in 1623. He was a voluminous composer, in various styles, both for the church and the chamber. His services and anthems are profound and admirable works; and some of them are still sung in our cathedrals. The famous canon, "Non nobis Domine," though it has been ascribed to Palestrina, is universally admitted to be the undoubted composition of Bird. That he was a performer of extraordinary powers upon the organ and virginals (a keyed instrument, which was the precursor of the spinet and harpsichord), appears from his numerous pieces composed for those instruments, particularly those contained in the celebrated volume (which we shall afterwards notice), known by the name of *Queen Elizabeth's Virginal Book**.

* One of Bird's publications is, "Psalms, Sonnets, and Songs of Sadnes and Pietie, of five parts; 1588." This collection is dedicated to Sir Christopher Hatton, Lord Chancellor, and contains the following reasons for learning to sing, the amusing quaintness of which is mingled with good sense.

"Reasons briefly set downe by th' auctor to persuade everie one to learn to sing.

1. It is a knowledge easilie taught and quicklie learned, when there is a good master and an apt scholer.

2. The exercise of singing is delightful to nature, and good to preserve the health of man.

3. It doth strengthen all parts of the heart, and doth open the pipes.

4. It is a singular good remedie for a stuttering and stammering in the speech.

5. It

ORLANDO GIBBONS was born at Cambridge, in 1583. He was organist of the Chapel Royal, and obtained a doctor's degree, at Oxford. He died of small-pox, in 1625. Gibbons's compositions for the church are to this day unrivalled in sublimity and grandeur; and possess, besides, a simplicity, clearness, and flow of melody, rarely met with in the productions of an age in which profound harmonical combinations, and elaborate intricacy of construction were chiefly sought after by composers. His services and anthems are still used in all our cathedrals, and will probably continue to be so for ages; for these grave and solemn strains are far above the influence of the mutability of taste and fashion, and, like the gothic piles in which they are heard, only become more and more venerable as they are more and more deeply impressed with the marks of antiquity.

Besides these illustrious musicians, the sixteenth century produced other great English masters in the

5. It is the best means to preserve a perfect pronounciation, and to make a good orator.

6. It is the onlie way to know wher nature hath bestowed the benefit of a good voyce; which gift is so rare, as there is not one amongst a thousand that hath it; and in manie that excellent gift is lost, because they want an arte to express nature.

7. There is not any musicke of instruments whatsoever, comparable to that which is made of the voyces of men, where the voyces are good, and the same well sorted and ordered.

8. The better the voyce is, the meeter it is to honour and serve God therewith; and the voyce of man is chiefly to be employed to that end. *Omnis spiritus laudet Dominum.*

Since singing is so good a thing,
I wish all men would learn to sing."

ecclesiastical style. Of these the most distinguished were RICHARD FARRANT, who died about the year 1585; ROBERT WHITE, who died about 1581; THOMAS MORLEY, who died about 1604, and was also eminent as a didactic writer on music and a madrigalist; and Dr. JOHN BULL, who died in 1622. Many fine compositions for the church by all these masters, are still extant.

Secular music was much cultivated in England in the sixteenth century; and a knowledge of it was considered indispensable to persons of condition. Queen Elizabeth was a performer on the virginals. The following anecdote has been often quoted; but it is sufficiently curious and characteristic to bear repetition. It is given in Sir James Melvil's *Memoirs*, which contain an account of his embassy from Mary of Scotland. After Elizabeth had asked him many questions about her beautiful rival—such as, how his queen dressed, what was the colour of her hair, which of them was the taller, &c., she asked, "what kind of exercises she used? I answered," says Melvil, "that, when I received my despatch, the queen was lately come from the Highland-hunting; that when her more serious affairs permitted, she was taken up with reading of histories; that sometimes she recreated herself with playing on the lute and virginals. She asked if she played well? I said, reasonably for a woman. The same day, after dinner, my lord of Hunsden drew me up to a quiet gallery, that I might hear some music, (but he said that he durst not avow it,) where I might hear the queen play upon the virginals. After I had harkened awhile, I took by the tapestry that hung before the door of the

chamber, and seeing her back was toward the door, I entered within her chamber, and stood a pretty space, hearing her play excellently well. But she left off immediately as soon as she turned about and saw me. She appeared to be surprised to see me, and came forward, seeming to strike me with her hand, alleging, she used not to play before men, but when she was solitary, to shun melancholy. She asked, how I came there? I answered, as I was walking with Lord Hunsden, as we passed by the chamber door, I heard such a melody as ravished me, whereby I was drawn in ere I knew how; excusing my fault of homeliness, as being brought up in the court of France where such freedom was allowed; declaring myself willing to endure what kind of punishment her majesty should be pleased to inflict upon me for so great an offence. Then she sat down low upon a cushion, and I on my knees by her; but with her own hand she gave me a cushion to lay under my knee, which at first I refused, but she compelled me to take it. She inquired whether my queen or she played best? In that I found myself compelled to give her the praise."

A MS. book of music compiled for her majesty's own use, and known by the name of *Queen Elizabeth's Virginal Book*, is still preserved in the British Museum. It contains compositions for that instrument by the principal masters of the time—Tallis, Bird, Bull, &c., some of which are so difficult, that they would puzzle a Cramer or a Moscheles. It is a mistake to suppose that the accumulation of difficulties, either in vocal or instrumental music, is a vice peculiar to recent times.

The unhappy Queen of Scots was herself an accom-

plished musician. The melancholy story of Chatelard, whose intoxication of love, caused by the pleasure which the queen took in hearing him sing and play on the lute, cost him his life, is well known: and still better known is the tragedy of David Rizzio. The idle notion of this Italian lutanist being the composer of the most beautiful melodies of Scotland, is too absurd to require serious notice.

In the course of the sixteenth century, the *psalmody* of the Protestant churches was brought nearly to the state in which it now remains, and in which it is desirable that it should continue to remain. For this psalmody we are indebted to the Reformers of Germany, especially Luther, who was himself an enthusiastic lover of music, and is believed to have composed some of the finest tunes, especially the hundredth psalm, and the hymn on the Last Judgment, which Braham sings with such sublime effect at our great performances of Sacred Music. Our psalm-tunes, consisting of prolonged and simple sounds, are admirably adapted for being sung by great congregations; and, as the impression produced by this kind of music is much increased by its venerable antiquity, it would be unfortunate should it yield to the influence of innovation. For this reason, it is much to be desired, that organists and directors of choirs should confine themselves to the established old tunes, instead of displacing them by modern compositions.

Towards the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth century, shone that constellation of English musicians, whose inimitable madrigals are still the delight of every lover of vocal harmony. The madrigal

appears to have originated in Italy. The etymology of the name has not been settled; but it seems to have been applied by the Italians to compositions in four, five, or six vocal parts, adapted to words of a tender or amorous character; and it is distinguished from the glee, to which it is near akin, in this, that the glee is sung by a single voice to each part, while in the madrigal, each part ought to be sung by a number of voices. Neither the madrigal nor glee ought to be accompanied by instruments. Most of the great Italian composers of the sixteenth century distinguished themselves by their madrigals; particularly Palestrina, Luca Marenzio, Giovanni Croce, Stradella, Steffani, and others. About the period of which we speak, the madrigals of these composers began to be adapted to English words, and thus the foundation was laid for a school in which we soon rivalled, if not surpassed, the Italians themselves. A collection of Italian madrigals, with English words, was published by N. Yonge, in 1588, under the title of *Musica Transalpina*, and followed by other publications of the same kind. Collections of original English madrigals were published, soon afterwards, by Weelkes, Kirbye, Bennet, and Wilbye. The desire of flattering Queen Elizabeth's personal vanity, which mingled itself so strangely with her great intellectual qualities, seems to have suggested to some of her courtiers the idea of presenting the virgin queen with a bouquet of poetry and music, in honour of her own charms and virtues. The execution of the task was committed to Morley, by whom the celebrated collection, intituled *The Triumphs of Oriana*, was published in 1602. It consists of twenty-four

madrigals, composed by almost all the great English musicians of the day.

These beautiful productions, in the age in which they appeared, were the music chiefly resorted to as a recreation in England. To sing in parts was an accomplishment held to be indispensable in a well-educated lady or gentleman. At a social meeting, when the madrigal books were laid on the table, everybody was expected to take a share in the harmony; and any one who declined on the score of inability, was looked upon with some contempt, as rude and low-bred. In Morley's *Introduction to Practical Music*, which, after the fashion of the day, is in the form of a dialogue, the scholar is made to seek instruction in consequence of a mortification he had met with, the evening before, owing to his ignorance of music *.

* This dialogue gives a curious picture of the manners of the time. The following is the passage referred to.

"*Polymathes.* Sage brother Philomathes, what haste? whither go you so fast?

Philomathes. To seek out an old friend of mine.

Pol. But before you goe, I praie you to repeat some of the discourses which you had yesternight at *Master Sophobulus*, his banquet, for commonly he is not without both wise and learned guestes.

Phi. It is true indeed, and yesternight there were a number of excellent schollers, both gentlemen and others; but all the purpose which was then discoursed upon was musicke.

Pol. I trust you were contented to suffer others to speak of that matter.

Phi. I would that had been the worst; for I was compelled to discover mine own ignorance, and confesse that I knewe nothing at all in it. *Pol.*

During the decline of music, in the seventeenth century, vocal harmony fell into neglect, in which state it remained until it was revived by the establishment of the Madrigal Society, in 1741, and by other associations for the performance of part-music, which have been since formed not only in London, but in all parts of the kingdom. The recent institution of the Vocal Society has given a great impulse to the cultivation of this species of music, which, there is reason to hope, may gain even more than its ancient popularity. It may be remarked, however, that though the madrigal is now sung in a style of which our forefathers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries could have no conception, yet the masters of that age remain unrivalled in that species of composition, and almost every

Pol. How so?

Phi. Among the rest of the guestes by chance Master Aphron came thither also, who, falling to discourse of musicke, was in an argument so quickly taken up and hotly pursued by Eudoxus and Calergus, two kinsmen of Master Sophobulus, as in his own art he was overthrowne; but he still sticking in his opinion, the two gentlemen requested me to examine his reasons and confute them; but I refusing and pretending ignorance, the whole company condemned me of discurtesie, being fully persuaded that I had been as skilfull in that art as they took me to be learned in others: but supper being ended, and musicke books, according to the custome being brought to the table, the mistress of the house presented me with a part, earnestly requesting me to sing; but when, after many excuses, I protested unfainedly that I could not, everie one began to wonder: yea, some whispered to others demanding how I was brought up. So that, upon shame of mine ignorance, I goe now to seek out mine old friende, Master Gnorimus, to make myself his scholler."

modern attempt to imitate them has proved utterly abortive.

During the sixteenth century, Germany possessed many profound theorists, and learned contrapuntists; but it was not till a later age that that country began to produce those great composers who have raised it to its present pre-eminence in music. In France, the composer of the sixteenth century who has left the greatest name, was CLAUDE LE JEUNE. This musician was in great favour in the time of Henry the Third and Fourth, when his music was much admired. It is described by French writers, as having rivalled, in its effects, the music of the ancients. In a curious work, —*Histoire de la Musique, et de ses Effets*,—published at Amsterdam in 1725, we are told, that, when this musician, at the nuptials of the Duke de Joyeuse, was performing one of his airs at a concert in the royal chamber, a young nobleman was so transported with passion, that he put his hand to his sword, and insisted on fighting with the persons about him; which extravagance surprised the king exceedingly, but Claude told his majesty that it was merely the effect of his music, and that he would calm the young gentleman in a moment, by playing an air in the *hypo-phrygian* mode. He did so, and the subject of his experiment immediately returned to his senses, and begged pardon of the king, who only laughed at his vivacity. This piece of exquisite pedantry shows us that one feature in the character of that first of pedants, Cornelius Sriblerus, is not exaggerated. When this learned person was declaiming with enthusiasm on the marvellous effect of the ancient music, his brother showed him two

apple-women scolding in the street, and advised him, as he was a performer in the ancient style, to try his skill upon them. "With that, Cornelius, undressed as he was, jumps out into the balcony, his lyre in hand, in his slippers, a stocking upon his head, and waistcoat of murrey-coloured satin upon his body: he touched his harp with a very unusual odd sort of an harpeggiatura, nor were his hopes frustrated. The odd equipage, the uncouth instrument, the strangeness of the man and of the music, drew the eyes and ears of the whole mob that were got about the two female champions, and, at last, of the combatants themselves. They all approached the balcony, in as close attention as Orpheus's first audience of cattle, or that of an Italian opera, when some favourite air is just awakened. The sudden effect of his music encouraged him mightily; and it was observed he never touched his lyre in so truly a chromatic and enharmonic manner, as upon that occasion. The mob laughed, sung, jumped, danced, and used many odd gesticulations, all which he judged to be caused by the various strains and modulations. 'Mark (quoth he), in this the power of the Ionian; in that you see the effect of the Eolian.' But in a little time they began to grow riotous, and threw stones: Cornelius then withdrew, but with the greatest air of triumph in the world. 'Brother, (said he,) do you observe I have mixed unawares too much of the Phrygian; I might change it to the Lydian, and soften their riotous tempers; but it is enough. Learn from this sample to speak with veneration of ancient music. If this lyre, in my unskilful hands, can perform such wonders, what must it not have done in those of a

Timotheus, or Terpander!' Having said this, he retired with the utmost exultation in himself, and contempt of his brother; and, it is said, behaved that night with such unusual haughtiness to his family, that they all had reason to wish for some ancient tibicen to calm his temper."

CHAPTER III.

MUSIC IN ITALY DURING THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY. — ORIGIN OF THE MUSICAL DRAMA. — STRADELLA. — CARISSIMI. — CESTI. — SALVATOR ROSA. — ALESSANDRO SCARLATI. — DOMENICO SCARLATTI. — ALLEGRI.

THE beginning of the seventeenth century may be considered as the era of the origin of the musical drama in Italy. The union of poetry and music, for the purpose of dramatic representation, includes the sacred drama, or oratorio, and the opera. Both these kinds of musical drama, like theatrical performances of every kind, appear to have taken their rise from the *Mysteries* and *Moralities* which formed the amusement of most nations of Europe during the middle ages. Dramatic representations of incidents taken from the Scriptures were introduced, at a very early period of the Church, in religious festivals, with the intention of impressing on the minds of the rude and ignorant multitude of those days, the principal characters and events of Sacred History. That the design of those entertainments was pious, cannot be doubted, notwithstanding their absurdity, buffoonery, and grossness, the burlesque language used by the characters, and the ridiculous situations in which they were placed. This apparent inconsistency is accounted for by the general want of refinement and taste;—qualities, the absence of which disfigures the literature and fine arts of Europe, till within a comparatively recent period. The prevailing coarseness of the times contaminated the sublimest

conceptions of the greatest painters of the fourteenth and fifteenth century, with grotesque, disgusting, and indecent figures; filled the most elevated poetry with mean and gross expressions, and made the dramatic entertainments of princes and ladies such as would shock the delicacy of an audience at Bartholomew Fair. An acquaintance with ancient literature gradually changed the form of dramatic compositions; they were moulded, in some degree, after the models of Greece and Rome, though they still retained much of the wildness and irregularity of their origin. This double line of ancestry is strongly apparent in the older English dramas; and, indeed, is perceptible on the English stage to this day. The same thing is the case with regard to Germany and Spain: but the French and Italians have, for a long period, endeavoured to approach the ancient models as nearly as modern manners and the genius of modern languages would permit.

It thus arose that music was first made use of in dramas on sacred subjects. These were followed by operas, or dramas on subjects of fabulous or profane history. After a time, the performance of sacred dramas in the theatre was gradually felt to be indecorous; and oratorios, though consisting of various characters, came to be performed in churches, and without theatrical action. In England, this is now *universally* the case;—and it is *generally* so in other parts of Europe. Of these productions, the *Messiah*, *Sampson*, *Israel in Egypt*, of Handel; the *Creation*, of Haydn; the *Mount of Olives*, of Beethoven; and the *Last Judgment*, of Spohr, are illustrious and well-

known examples. On the Continent, however, musical dramas on sacred subjects are still produced on the stage; of which the most recent example is the *Mosè in Egitto* of Rossini; the subject of which, when it was performed in England, was, in conformity with the feelings entertained among us, changed to that of *Peter the Hermit*, the celebrated mover of the Crusades, who is represented, with his followers, as being captives of the soldan of Egypt.

Sacred dramas, containing music, seem to have been represented in Italy at a very early period. One, on the subject of Abraham and Isaac was performed at Florence in 1449; and there are records of many others, on such subjects as Cain and Abel, Abraham and Sarah, the Prodigal Son, &c., being performed during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. These, however, were not regular musical dramas; but the dialogue was intermixed with chorusses and hymns, and with instrumental music between the acts.

The first sacred drama that was entirely sung, is agreed to have been an allegorical production entitled *Rappresentazione del Animo e del Corpo*, by Emilio del Cavaliere, which was performed at Rome in 1600. This drama is of the nature of a morality; and its characters are the Body, the Soul, Pleasure, the World, and Time. The dialogue is sung in *Recitative*, then first invented; and is intermingled with chorusses; and the singers were accompanied, behind the scenes, with instruments known at the time—a double lyre, which Burney conjectures to have been a *viol-da-gamba*, the precursor of the modern violoncello, a harpsichord, a large guitar, and two flutes. There is no appearance of any

Air in this opera; the music consisting entirely of the recitative which has been mentioned, and of the chorusses. The recitative, though stiff and formal, is the ground-work of that musical speech which the Italians have gradually brought to its present perfection. The chorusses are in four parts, in plain harmony, and resemble exactly modern psalmody. The singing of the chorusses was accompanied by *dancing*, which must have been of a very grave character, to correspond with such music.

This musical drama led the way to many others of the same kind. Of these, one of the most remarkable is *Il Santo Alessio*, composed by Steffano Landi, and performed at Rome in 1634. In this piece, there are *Airs* for single voices, which are distinguished from the recitatives by a more regular and rhythmical melody. The harmony, however, is barbarous, and the melody would give no pleasure to modern ears. Very different, however, is the case, with an Oratorio by the celebrated Stradella, which was produced very soon after that time; for it, and the other works of this distinguished person, though now known only to those who are curious in musical history, contain traits of the highest genius, and passages that will always be found beautiful.

ALESSANDRO STRADELLA, remarkable not less for his romantic and tragical history, than for his musical genius, was born at Naples, in the earlier part of the seventeenth century. While yet a young man, and having acquired great reputation at Venice, he was employed by a nobleman of that city to give instructions in music to a young lady of noble birth, named

Hortensia. She had been seduced from her family by this nobleman, with whom she was living, when Stradella was introduced to her acquaintance. She was beautiful and accomplished; and, notwithstanding her unhappy fall from virtue, must have possessed estimable, as well as amiable qualities. A mutual passion sprung up in the minds of the instructor and his pupil; and they agreed to fly together from the house of her seducer. The enraged Italian, on discovering their flight, determined that nothing but their death should satisfy his vengeance; and hired two bravoes, with instructions to follow them, and execute his purpose, wherever they should be found. They proceeded to Naples, the birth-place of Stradella, supposing he would most probably return thither. After a vain search, however, in that city, they learned that he and the lady were living at Rome, where she was regarded as his wife. They applied to their employer for a recommendation to the Venetian ambassador at Rome, in order that they might find an asylum when the deed was perpetrated; and, thus provided, they arrived at that city.

They soon discovered the residence of Stradella; but, hearing that an oratorio of his composition was to be performed in one of the churches, in which he was himself to sing, they determined to waylay and murder him on his return home, in the darkness of the night. They entered the church while Stradella was singing; and such was the exquisite beauty and pathos of his music, that these savages were melted by it; and they could not bear to take the life of a man who had procured them such sweet and unwonted emotions. They

waited for him in the street; but, instead of plunging their poniards in his heart, informed him that such had, indeed, been their purpose, which they now detested; and warned him to fly with his mistress to some place of greater safety, for that the revenge of their enemy would soon reach them there.

The lovers immediately hastened from Rome, and took up their abode at Turin. The bravoes, returning to their employer, told him that they had traced the fugitives to Turin; but that, as the laws were exceedingly severe in that place, and the chance of escape, after the commission of such a deed, very difficult, they would have no further concern in the matter. The Venetian, however, was determined to persist in his bloody purpose; and therefore engaged two other assassins, on whom he could place more reliance, procuring for them letters of recommendation from the French ambassador at Venice to the ambassador of the same country at Turin, in the character of two merchants who were led, by their commercial pursuits, to that place. The murderers delivered their credentials, and remained in the city, waiting for a favourable opportunity.

In the mean time, the duchess of Savoy, then regent of the kingdom, having been informed of the story of the lovers, and knowing the imminent danger in which they were, placed Hortensia in a convent, and retained Stradella in her service, giving him a residence in the palace. After some time, Stradella's fears for his safety began to abate; and one evening, having ventured to walk on the ramparts of the town, he was attacked by two ruffians, who each stabbed him with a dagger, and

fled to the house of the French ambassador, as a sanctuary. The news of this assault immediately reached the duchess, who ordered the gates to be shut, and demanded the assassins of the French ambassador, who refused to give them up. Stradella's wounds, however, proved not to be mortal; and the murderers were allowed to escape, in order to put an end to the discussion as to their delivery to justice.

The persecutor of this hapless pair remained implacable, and continued to have them constantly watched by spies, whom he kept at Turin. A year elapsed after Stradella's cure was completed; and, no renewal of any attempt having been made, he began to think himself in safety. The duchess of Savoy, deeply interested in the fate of the lovers, had them married in her palace, and the prospect of happiness was now before them. It was a deceitful prospect. Stradella, having to compose an opera for Genoa, went to that city, carrying his wife with him. The Venetian, informed by his spies, of this movement, and finding that his victims were no longer under the protection of the Duchess of Savoy, despatched murderers, who, watching for an opportunity, rushed into their chamber early one morning, and stabbed them to the heart in each other's arms. The murderers effected their escape, and were never more heard of.

Of the truth of this strange and melancholy story, in all its particulars, there seems to be no doubt. The attempted assassination of Stradella at Turin made a strong sensation over all Italy; and the recommendation of the assassins, which M. d'Estrade, the French Ambassador at Venice, had been induced to give M.

de Villars, his countryman, in the same capacity at Turin, was the subject of an explanation between these functionaries, which would have led to the delivery of the murderers to justice had their attempt terminated fatally. All the writers who relate the story concur in the details which have now been given.

Stradella's death is generally said to have taken place in 1670; but Burney, who had a copy of the opera which he composed for Genoa immediately before his murder, mentions that the dedication written by himself, is dated Genoa, 1678.

His oratorio, which has been already mentioned, and which seems to have been the only one he composed, is entitled *Oratorio di San Giovanni Battista*. The principal personages are St. John, Herod, and Herodias his daughter, to whom are given airs and duetts, intermixed with chorusses. A specimen of this music is given by Burney; and, when considered with reference to the period when composed, it is admirable; the harmony being pure, and the melody expressive and even graceful. "This oratorio," says Burney, "rises in merit the further we advance. The recitative is in general excellent; and there is scarce a movement among the airs in which genius, skill, and study, do not appear. This is the first work in which the proper sharps and flats are generally placed at the clef. The modulation in the recitative, however, is less timid than that of Stradella's predecessors; and he neither thought it necessary to place sharps nor flats at the clefs of his recitative, nor to begin and end in one key, but let the sentiment and passion of the words alone govern his modulation with the true spirit of declamation." Most

of the airs are written on a ground bass, without any other accompaniment; but some of them are accompanied with rich harmony; and in one of the chorusses there is a fugue on two subjects, which has been considered worthy of being compared to those of Handel. This chorus, moreover, is remarkable for containing probably the earliest instance of the chord of the extreme sharp sixth, from which so many striking effects have been derived by succeeding harmonists.

Besides this oratorio, and the opera composed for Genoa, a number of detached vocal compositions of Stradella are still to be found in collections of musical antiquities; from a perusal of which it is evident that they served as models for composers of a much later period.

The first secular or profane drama, wholly set to music, or, in other words, the first opera, seems to have been *Dafne*, composed by Jacopo Peri, and performed at Florence in 1597. The dialogue in this piece is sung, or declaimed in recitative similar to that employed about the same time, in the sacred drama of Emilio del Cavaliere, between whom and Peri there was a contest for the honour of the invention of recitative. The way for this first attempt at a regular musical drama seems to have been paved by Vincenzo Galilei, who, a few years before, had set Dante's celebrated episode of Count Ugolino to music for a single voice. The success of *Dafne* induced Peri to compose the music of *Eurydice*, which was performed at Florence in 1600, on the occasion of the marriage of Mary of Medicis to Henry the Fourth of France. The recitative in these operas is not, like that of modern times,

adapted to rapid and animated utterance; it is a sort of languid and drawling melody, divested of rhythm; but, at that time, it must have had a novel and striking effect, and argued great genius and originality in its inventor. Before that period, there was nothing in music that could have suggested it; and it has since been brought to its present state by a long series of gradual improvements. The only semblance of an air in this opera consists in certain anacreontic verses sung by one of the characters, the music of which is preceded by a short symphony, and partakes of the dull and psalmodic character which generally belonged to the airs of that day, excepting the national airs, which then had not attracted the notice of musicians.

The celebrated CLAUDIO MONTEVERDE, whom we have already had occasion to mention as the boldest adventurer of his time in the unexplored regions of harmony, was also one of the first composers of operas. He set the opera of *Ariadne* for the court of Mantua in 1606; and *Orfeo* in 1607.

The following curious account of the first performance of operas at Rome, is given by a contemporary writer, Pietro della Valle. After mentioning that a piece, composed by a musician named Quagliati, was performed by a company who perambulated the streets of Rome, in a cart, during the Carnival of 1606, he says:— "Though no more than five voices, or five instruments, were employed, the exact number which an ambulant cart could contain, yet these afforded great variety; as, besides the dialogue of single voices, sometimes two, or three, and at last all the five sung together, which had an admirable effect. The music of this piece, as may

be seen in the copies of it that were afterwards printed, though dramatic, was not all in simple recitative, which would have been tiresome, but ornamented with beautiful passages, and movements in measure, without deviating, however, from the true theatrical style; on which account it pleased extremely, as was manifest from the prodigious concourse of people it drew after it, who, so far from being tired, heard it performed five or six several times; there were some even who continued to follow our cart to ten or twelve different places where it stopped, and who never quitted us as long as we remained in the street, which was from four o'clock in the evening till after midnight." One cannot read this passage without being amused with the primitive and *Thespian* manner in which operas were first performed in modern Rome.

From the writings of Della Valle, it appears that regular musicians were now collecting, and using the national airs of different countries. He mentions the Neapolitan ballads as being very pretty; and adds that he was, perhaps, the first who brought the Sicilian airs to Rome, where, he says, they were as common an as well sung as in Sicily itself. He speaks also of Spanish, Portuguese, and other foreign airs, as being then recently known at Rome; and mentions his having formed a collection of Persian, Turkish, Arabian, and Indian tunes. This practice contributed greatly to the rapid improvement in melody, which now became every day more flowing, graceful, and natural.

Francesco Cavalli, who was born at Venice about the beginning of the seventeenth century, may be considered as one of the creators of the Italian opera. In

his first opera entitled *Giasone*, which was performed in 1649, he introduced *airs*, and thus added greatly to the beauty and interest of the musical drama, which till then had consisted entirely of recitative. He is believed, too, to have been the first who employed *modulation*, or changes of key, to express changes of feeling or sentiment—a fact which speaks volumes for his genius and imagination. His recitatives are said to have been remarkable for their boldness, expression, and adaptation to the dramatic character of the dialogue. He was also a celebrated singer and performer on the organ.

The opera, very soon after its introduction, became a favourite entertainment over Italy, and employed the talents of a great number of composers during the seventeenth century, who once enjoyed great celebrity; but their works are long since totally lost, and nothing is known regarding them but their names, an enumeration of which would be uninteresting and useless. One of these operas, however, may be noticed, on account of the splendour with which it was got up. It was the opera of *Berenice*, composed by Domenico Freschi, and performed at Padua in 1680. From the account of the decorations contained in the printed edition of the piece, it appears that there were chorusses of one hundred virgins, one hundred soldiers, one hundred horsemen in iron armour, forty cornet-players, and six trumpeters on horseback, six drummers six ensigns, six sackbuts, six great flutes, six minstrels playing on Turkish instruments, six others on octave flutes, six pages, three serjeants, six cymbalists, twelve huntsmen, twelve grooms, six coachmen for the triumph, six

others for the procession, two lions led by two Turks, two elephants by two others, Berenice's triumphal car drawn by four horses, six other cars with prisoners and spoils, drawn by twelve horses, and six coaches for the procession. The scenery and machinery are described as being on a scale of magnitude and splendour, of which, even in these days of *spectacle*, we can hardly form a conception. Among other things, there were stables with an hundred live horses; a forest for hunting, with representations of every species of chase,—as of the wild boar, the stag, and the bear. At the end of the third act, an enormous globe descended from the sky, which, opening, divided itself into two other globes that were suspended in the air; and on these globes were representations of Time, Fame, Virtue, and other allegorical figures. We complain, that in our day the talents of the poet, musician, and performer, are of less consequence in the theatre than those of the machinist and scene-painter; and that, in our operas, instead of enjoying the melody of beautiful voices, supported by a delicate and harmonious orchestra, we are deafened by the brazen clangour of Rossini's Turkish bands. But all this is nothing to the glare that must have dazzled the eyes, and the uproar that must have astounded the ears, of the spectators of this ancient opera of *Berenice*.

The talents of the greatest Italian composers of the seventeenth century were chiefly exhibited in the composition of *Cantatas*. The cantata of those days was for a single voice, and consisted of a mixture of recitative and air, like the scenes of the musical drama, by which it appears to have been suggested. The singer either

accompanied himself, or was accompanied by another performer, on a single instrument, as the harpsichord, violoncello, or violin.

Among those who distinguished themselves in this species of composition, one of the oldest, as well as the greatest, was GIACOMO CARISSIMI. Of the life of this great musician very little appears to be known. He began to be celebrated about the year 1635; and was maestro di capella of the German college at Rome. His productions are very numerous, consisting of sacred and secular cantatas, and *motets*, or sacred compositions for several voices; many of which are still preserved, and frequently performed by the lovers of good music of the old school.

Carissimi greatly improved *recitative*. He deprived it, in a great measure, of the formal closes or cadences which it had in common with the *airs* of that time, and rendered it more articulate and expressive, by adopting the accents and inflections of speech. In his airs, too, there is a simplicity, pathos, and flow of melody which are still, and, we apprehend, will always be sufficient to give delight to unperverted taste. Many of his works are preserved in the British Museum, and in the collection made by Dr. Aldrich, at Christ's Church, Oxford; and are still sung by those who continue to enjoy the vocal compositions of the great old masters of Italy and Germany, as well as England. One of the greatest of his compositions is the sacred drama of *Jephtha*, which is admirable for its clear and simple harmony, its graceful melody, and dramatic expression. The daughter and her attendants going out to meet her victorious father,—their fatal meeting, the anguish of

the warrior and his child, and the lamentations of the people, are expressed with the utmost truth and pathos, and, if sung by great performers, would still be most powerful in effect. The air, in which Jephtha's daughter bewails her unhappy fate, is exquisite; and, of the chorus of the people, *Plorate filiæ Israel*, it is enough to say, that Handel has made it the foundation of the chorus, *Hear Jacob's God!* in his Oratorio of *Sampson*.

Several of Carissimi's motets* are still sung in our Cathedrals, in the form of anthems, with English words by Dr. Aldrich. One of these, *I am well pleased*, is generally known. Dr. Aldrich was an enthusiastic admirer of the sacred compositions of the old Italian school, and had a singular felicity in naturalizing some of its finest productions. Two of Palestrina's motets have thus been adapted by him, and are still sung as anthems in our cathedrals, the one to the words begin-

* The *motet* is a piece of sacred music, resembling our *anthem* in its form. The etymology of the word is doubtful. Morley, in his Introduction to Harmony, gives the following derivation to the word, which is probably the correct one:—"A motet is properlie a song made for the church, either upon some hymne or anthem, or such like; and that name I take to have been given to that kinde of musicke in opposition to the other, which they called *canto fermo*, and we do commonlie call plain song; for, as nothing is more opposite to standing and firmness than motion, so they did give the motet that name of moving, because it is in a manner quite contrarie to the other, which, after some sorte, and in respect to the other, standeth still." Du Cange (*voce Motetum*) says that, though this kind of composition is now confined to the church, it was originally of the most gay and lively nature; an opinion not inconsistent with the meaning of the word.

ning *O God, Thou art my God*, and the other, *We have heard with our ears, O Lord!*

A graceful and elegant duet by this composer, *Dite, O Cieli*, is still to be found among amateurs of the class which we have just described. Dr. Blow's celebrated song, *Go, perjured Man*, the most pleasing of his works, is a close imitation of it. In all the copies of Dr. Blow's song, the words do not make sense; but the song is to be found in the *Hesperides* of Herrick; a collection of poems which had fallen into utter oblivion until within these few years, when they have been reprinted, and have attracted considerable attention—more, we conceive, than they deserve; for the book is truly an "unweeded garden," containing a few flowers in a wilderness of base and unseemly trash. This song is one of the best things in the collection: there is something wild and original in the conclusion.

> Go, perjured man, and if thou e'er return
> To see the small remainder of my urn,
> When thou shalt laugh at my religious dust,
> And ask, Where's now the colour, form, and trust
> Of woman's beauty? and, with hand more rude,
> Rifle the flowers which the virgins strewed;
> Know, I have prayed to Fury, that the wind
> May blow my ashes up, and strike thee blind!

It is to Carissimi that a celebrated saying, become proverbial in all the fine arts, is ascribed. Being praised for the graceful *ease* of his melodies, he is said to have replied;—"*Ah! questo facile quanto è difficile!*"

Marc' Antonio Cesti, who was a scholar of Carissimi, composed many beautiful cantatas, of which there

is a collection in Christ's Church, Oxford. Sir John Hawkins gives, as a specimen of this composer, a little duet, "Cara e dolce Libertà," so flowing and graceful, that it resembles the Italian melody of a full century later. The same period produced several other excellent writers of this class, whom, with a few exceptions, we must pass over without particular notice.

SALVATOR ROSA was the celebrated painter; and it appears that his genius for music was not inferior to that for the art which he professed. Music was his earliest passion, and maintained its place in his mind, along with poetry and painting, during his whole life. He is, perhaps, the most remarkable instance that ever has occurred of the union of these sister arts in the same person. He was educated for the church; but his ardent and impetuous temperament was ill suited to the austerities of a monastic life. In his youth, before he devoted himself to painting, he was distinguished for his performance on the lute, and used to gratify both his musical and amorous propensities by serenading the objects of his transient attachments. "Many," says Lady Morgan, in her *Life of Salvator Rosa*, "of those gay and *gaillard* figures, which, in afterlife, escaped from his graphic pencil and rapid graver, with hair and feather floating in the breeze, are said to have been but copies of himself, as he stood niched under the shadow of a balcony, or reclined on the prow of a felucca, singing to his lute, the charms or cruelty of some listening Irene or Chloris of the moment."

Rosa afterwards turned his attention to painting, as a profession,—but, for a time, failed of success. The

foundation of his popularity, even in this art, was laid by his talents for music and poetry, and his extraordinary powers as a buffoon, or comic actor. We quote from Lady Morgan's work, which, notwithstanding the affectation of which she can never divest herself, is very clever and entertaining, an account of the circumstance which made him a favourite, and a lion, at Rome.

"Towards the end of the carnival of 1639, when the spirits of the revellers (as is always the case in Rome) were making a brilliant rally for the representations of the last week, a car, or stage, highly ornamented, drawn by oxen, and occupied by a masked troop, attracted universal attention by its novelty and singular representations. The principal personage announced himself as a certain Signor Formica, a Neapolitan actor, and appeared in the character of Coviello. Coviello, one of the "seven masks" of Italy, or national dramatic characters, is the theatrical representative of the Calabrians; the wit of Coviello, therefore, is supposed to be as sharp as the air of his native Abruzzi. Adroit and vain-glorious, a Proteus in character, language, and manner, he still preserves his native accent and habit; and his black velvet jacket and pantaloons, studded with silver buttons and rich embroidery, were well calculated to set off the handsome person of the wearer, if he happened to possess one, and to give to his figure a certain air of elegance, strongly contrasted with his conventional mask, with its crimson cheeks, black nose and forehead. The present representative of this character displayed so much genuine wit, such bitter satire, and exquisite humour, rendered doubly effective

by a Neapolitan accent, and '*i motivi dei lazzi nazionali*,' or national gesticulations, that other representations were abandoned; and Gipsies told fortunes, and Jews hung in vain. The whole population of Rome gradually assembled round the novel, the inimitable Formica. The people relished his flashes of splenetic humour aimed at the great; the higher orders were delighted with an *improvisatore*, who, in the intervals of his dialogues, sung to the lute, of which he was a perfect master, the Neapolitan ballads then so much in vogue. The attempts made by his fellow-revellers to obtain some share of the plaudits he so abundantly received were all abortive; while, says Baldinucci, '*Come capo di tutti, e pur spiritoso, e ben parlante, con bei ghiribizzi e lazzi spiritosi teneva a se mezza Roma*,' at the head of everything, by his wit, eloquence, and brilliant humour, he drew half Rome to himself. He collected about him, says Passeri, the whole of the Roman population, to whom he gave the most humorous recipes. It is supposed that he borrowed the technicalities of these recipes from Giovanni Breccio, a celebrated Roman physician of that day. The contrast between his beautiful musical and poetical compositions, and those Neapolitan gesticulations in which he indulged, when, laying aside his lute, he presented his vials and salves to the delighted audience, exhibited a versatility of genius, which it was difficult to attribute to any individual then known in Rome. Guesses and suppositions were still vainly circulating among all classes, when, on the close of the carnival, Formica, ere he drove his triumphal car from the Piazza Navona, which, with one of the streets in

the Trastevere, had been the principal scene of his triumph, ordered his troop to raise their masks, and, removing his own, discovered that Coviello was the sublime author of the Prometheus, and his little troop the '*partigiani*' of Salvator Rosa. All Rome was from this moment, to use a phrase which all his biographers have adopted, '*filled with his fame.*' That notoriety which his high genius had failed to procure for him, was obtained at once by those lighter talents, which he had nearly suffered to fall into neglect, while more elevated views had filled his mind."

It does not belong to a work on music to enter into much biographical detail respecting a great painter. It is sufficient to say, that Salvator Rosa rapidly acquired fame and fortune; and that music was his solace in all his labours and difficulties. *Si dilettò*, says Baldinucci, one of his biographers, *in oltre mode della musica, e suonò il luto.*

We are indebted to Dr. Burney for a knowledge of Salvator Rosa's musical compositions. "Among the musical manuscripts," says he, "purchased at Rome, in 1770, one that ranks the highest in my own favour, was the music-book of Salvator Rosa, the painter, in which are contained, not only many airs and cantatas, set by Carissimi, Cesti, Luigi, Cavalli, Legrenzi, Capellini, Pasqualini, and Bandini, of which the words of several are by Salvator Rosa; but eight entire cantatas, written, set, and transcribed, by the celebrated painter himself. The book was purchased of his granddaughter, who inhabited the house in which her ancestor lived and died. The hand-writing was ascertained by collation with his letters and satires, of which

the originals are still preserved by his descendants." Of the poetry and music, by Rosa himself, contained in this collection, Burney gives several specimens. The poetry is of a very high order; in some parts gloomy, bitter, and satirical; in others, possessing the wild imagination which characterzies his pencil; and sometimes tender and beautiful. One of the cantatas is the incantation of a female distracted with love, disappointment, and revenge. She composes a charm by means of all the diabolical ingredients of the witches' caldron in *Macbeth*, the enumeration of which is contained in verses of great energy. There is another, of which the words are very beautiful. After promising eternal constancy to his mistress, he says,

E se la natura, avara
Del suo mortal tesoro,
Da questo crin mai ti rubasse l'oro,
Povero, ma contento,
Lo vedrò bianco,
E l'amerò d' argento*.

The melodies of Rosa, given by Burney, are very beautiful and expressive. One of them, notwithstanding the difference of measure, reminds us much of Purcell's air in the *Beggar's Opera*, "Virgins are like the fair flower;" and, from the excellence of the basses

* Burney's translation of these pretty lines is somewhat flat; but the following, which we find in *The Harmonicon* for May, 1824, is elegant:

If Time, penurious of his treasure,
Shall steal the gold from that bright hair,
Poor, but contented, still with pleasure
I shall behold the whiteness there—
Nay, love the simple silver more
Than e'er I prized the richer ore.

which are set to them, it appears, that, in knowledge of the art, as well as genius, he was not behind the best composers of his day.

ALESSANDRO SCARLATTI was born at Naples in 1650. His first essays in composition were made at Vienna, where he had the greatest success as a writer, both for the church and the theatre. After spending some years in travelling through Germany and Italy, he returned to Naples, where he seems to have spent the rest of his long life. He died there in 1728, at the age of 78. Scarlatti, like most great authors, was a very voluminous one; he is said to have composed a hundred operas, and an immense number of oratorios and masses, all of which are now lost; but many of his cantatas survive, and are still the admiration of the greatest musicians. His imagination was so fertile, and the variety of new and beautiful passages which he produced was so great, that his manner was copied, and his ideas borrowed, by the most distinguished composers, for more than a century after his death. His cantatas were accompanied on the harpsichord or the violoncello; and the basses, which were thus frequently the sole accompaniment, had a richness and variety rarely to be found in modern vocal music. Geminiani used to relate, that Francischelli, a celebrated performer on the violoncello, accompanied one of these cantatas at Rome so admirably, while Scarlatti himself played the harpsichord, that the company, having the usual share of Catholic superstition, were firmly persuaded that it was not Francischelli who was playing the violoncello, but an angel that had descended, and had assumed his shape.

Scarlatti's cantatas are well known to the lovers of the old Italian music. They are exceedingly difficult, both to sing and to accompany; requiring, in the singer, much taste, judgment, and expression, and in the accompanist, not only the utmost delicacy, but a knowledge of harmony which is very seldom conferred by the present system of musical education. When so performed, however, they never fail to delight those who can feel the highest beauties of music.

"The most voluminous," says Burney, "and most original composer of cantatas that has ever existed in any country to which my inquiries have reached, seems to have been Alessandro Scarlatti. Indeed this master's genius was truly creative, and I find part of his property among the stolen goods of all the best composers of the first forty or fifty years of the present (the eighteenth) century."

Domenico Scarlatti, the son of Alessandro Scarlatti, was born in 1683, and inherited the genius of his father. He distinguished himself as a composer for the church and the theatre; but is now chiefly remembered on account of his compositions for the harpsichord, on which instrument he was the greatest performer of his time. His lessons for the harpsichord, dedicated to the Queen of Spain, were, according to Burney, "the wonder and delight of every hearer who had a spark of enthusiasm about him, and could feel new and bold effects, intrepidly produced by the breach of almost all the old and established rules of composition." The following anecdote, given by Burney, shows the impression made in his own time by the novelty and fire of his style, and his powers of execution. It was

related to Burney by Roseingrave, an English musician of considerable eminence, who, in his youth, had travelled in Italy for the sake of improvement in his art. "Being arrived at Venice, in his way to Rome as he himself told me, he was invited, as a stranger and a virtuoso, to an academia at the house of a nobleman, where, among others, he was requested to sit down to the harpsichord, and favour the company with a toccata, as a specimen *della sua virtù*. And, says he, "finding myself rather better in courage and finger than usual, I exerted myself, my dear friend, and fancied by the applause I received, that my performance had made some impression on the company.' After a cantata had been sung by a scholar of Fr. Gasparini, who was there to accompany her, a grave young man, dressed in black and in a black wig, who had stood in one corner of the room, very quiet and attentive, while Roseingrave played, being asked to sit down to the harpsichord, when he began to play, Rosy said he thought ten hundred d—ls had been at the instrument; he never heard such passages of execution and effect before. The performance so far surpassed his own, and every degree of perfection to which he thought it possible he should ever arrive, that if he had been in sight of any instrument with which to have done the deed, he should have cut off his own fingers. Upon inquiring the name of this extraordinary performer, he was told it was Domenico Scarlatti, son of the celebrated Cavalier Alessandro Scarlatti. Roseingrave declared he did not touch an instrument himself for a month." The compositions of Domenico Scarlatti continued to be the favourite study of performers on the harpsichord, till this instru-

ment was laid aside in consequence of the new style of composition and performance produced by the invention of the piano-forte. Even to this day, though they are wholly unknown to the multitude of piano-forte players, who confine their attention to what is new and fashionable, these pieces are familiar to those great masters of the instrument whose ideas are enlarged, and powers extended, by an acquaintance with every style of composition: and the writings of Cramer, Moscheles, and Hummel, are full of the traces, not only of Domenico Scarlatti, but of Sebastian Bach, Handel, and the other great harpsichord writers of the last century. Moscheles, in particular, has, of late, frequently performed the compositions of these old masters in public; and his example may probably lead to the revival of a great quantity of admirable music which was hastening to unmerited oblivion.

Giuseppe Scarlatti, son of Domenico, and grandson of Alessandro Scarlatti, was born at Naples, in 1718, and died at Vienna, in 1776. He passed the greater part of his life at Vienna, where he was much esteemed both as a dramatic composer and as a performer on the harpsichord. He produced many operas, some of which had very great success.

Gregorio Allegri, the composer of the celebrated *Miserere*, of the effects of which, when performed in the Pope's chapel, so many accounts have been given by travellers in Italy, was of the family of Correggio, the painter, who also bore the name of Allegri. Of this composer little more is known than that he was admitted into the Pope's chapel in 1629, and died in 1652. He was buried in the chapel of Santo Filippo

Neri, in the Chiesa Nuova at Rome, which is now the common place of interment for the singers in the Pontifical chapel. The following striking epitaph is engraved on its walls:—

Cantores pontificii,
Ne quos vivos
Concors melodia junxit,
Mortuos corporis discors resolutio dissolveret,
Hic unà condi voluere*.

The *Miserere* of Allegri is to be found in different collections; and, among others, in Choron's *Collection of Classical Music.* It is a piece of very plain and simple harmony; and its appearance on paper, or its effect when sung in the ordinary way, give no idea of the impression made by it, when performed in the Pope's chapel, where it has been annually heard, in passion-week, ever since the time it was composed. But there it is sung by a body of musicians, who are trained to give it effect, by certain traditional modes of swelling and diminishing the sounds—by accelerating or retarding the measure, &c., according to the expression of the different verses; and the effect is further heightened by adventitious circumstances. The pope and cardinals are prostrated on the ground, the lights are extinguished one by one, showing more and more dimly the appal-

* It is difficult to translate the musical phraseology of this epitaph; but its sentiment may be conveyed thus:

The pontifical singers,
In order that
The harmony which united them in life
May not be broken by their separation in death,
Wish to rest together in this place.

ling figures of Michael Angelo's Last Judgment; the music becomes slower and slower, and more and more faint, till at last the sounds are almost inaudible, and are followed by a profound silence. It is easy to conceive, that a strain of simple harmony, sung in such a manner, and with such accompanying circumstances, may excite the strongest feelings of religious awe.

The following anecdote, regarding this *Miserere*, is told by Dr. Burney, in his *Musical Tour in Italy*, and is confirmed by other writers:

"The emperor, Leopold the First, not only a lover and patron of music, but a good composer himself, ordered his ambassador at Rome to entreat the Pope to permit him to have a copy of the celebrated *Miserere* of Allegri, for the use of the Imperial Chapel at Vienna; which being granted, a copy was made by the master of the Pope's chapel, and sent to the emperor, who had then in his service some of the first singers of the age; but, notwithstanding the abilities of the performers, this composition was so far from answering the expectations of the emperor and his court, that he concluded the Pope's *Maestro di Capella*, in order to keep it a mystery, had put a trick upon him, and sent him another composition. Upon which, in great warmth, he sent an express to his holiness, with a complaint against the *Maestro di Capella*, which occasioned his immediate disgrace and dismission from the service of the Papal chapel: and in so great a degree was the Pope offended at the supposed imposition of his composer, that, for a long time, he would neither see him, nor hear his defence. However, at length, the poor man got one of the cardinals to plead his cause, and to

acquaint his holiness, that the style of singing in his chapel, particularly in performing the *Miserere*, was such as could not be expressed by notes, nor taught or transmitted to any other place, but by example; for which reason, the piece in question, though faithfully transcribed, must fail in its effect when performed elsewhere. His holiness did not understand music, and could hardly comprehend how the same notes should sound so differently in different places; however, he ordered his *Maestro di Capella* to write down his defence, in order to be sent to Vienna, which was done; and the emperor, seeing no other way of gratifying his wishes with respect to this composition, begged of the Pope, that some of the musicians in the service of his holiness might be sent to Vienna, to instruct those in the service of his chapel, how to perform the *Miserere* of Allegri, in the same expressive manner as in the Sistine chapel at Rome, which was granted. But, before they arrived, a war broke out with the Turks, which called the emperor from Vienna; and the *Miserere* has never yet, perhaps, been truly performed, but in the Pope's chapel."

CHAPTER IV.

MUSIC IN GERMANY AND FRANCE DURING THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.—KEISER.—LULLI.

GERMANY, during the seventeenth century, produced a great number of excellent musicians, several of whom once enjoyed high reputation, but their works are now utterly forgotten, and little more is known of them than their names,—a catalogue of which would be wholly uninteresting. At that period, the music of the Germans was distinguished by learning and depth, rather than facility and grace; by intricate combinations of harmony, rather than flowing and expressive air. This, indeed, is in a considerable degree, the character of the German music to this day, when compared with that of Italy. But the more recent German composers have drawn from the fountain of Italian melody, draughts which have awakened their imagination and refined their taste; their music has gained beauty and simplicity, without losing the richness of its harmony. In saying this, we mean it to apply to those only who have studied the Italian models; for it is undeniable, that much of the German music is still dry and over-laboured,—abounding in rugged combinations, and deficient in smooth and agreeable strains; partaking too much, in short, of the qualities of *saur-kraut*, to all but German tastes. We mean our remark to apply to *all* the music of Mozart; to most of that of Haydn; to

those parts of all the greatest works of Beethoven, where the most enchanting strains of melody come upon the ear, through his wild and gloomy masses of sound, like gleams of sunshine through the clouds and darkness of an April sky: and, finally, to the best and happiest effusions of Weber and Spohr.

At the period, however, of which we now speak, the German music had received none of this sweetening infusion; and therefore, it is not surprising that the works of many composers, illustrious in their day, should now be forgotten, even in their own country. The compositions of their great organists, and writers for the church, are still frequently made use of. But of all their dramatic productions not a vestige now remains, though it appears that this species of music was extensively cultivated.

The German princes began to have operas performed at their courts early in the seventeenth century; and some of these were by Italian composers brought into Germany for that purpose. The first opera, however, performed on a public stage, was at Hamburgh, in 1678. It was *Orontes*, by Thiel; and the same year, a sacred drama was performed, called *Adam and Eve*. The greatest German composer of that period, was KEISER, a man, who, though now sunk in oblivion, once enjoyed a splendid reputation. He kept possession of the Hamburgh stage for upwards of forty years, and wrote *a hundred and eighteen* operas, besides innumerable cantatas, and other detached pieces of music. He was born in 1673, and died in 1739. Burney, who had examined some of his works, speaks in high terms of his skill and originality, but says, that he was deficient

in grace and facility. The celebrated Hasse said to Dr. Burney, that " Keiser was one of the greatest musicians the world had ever seen."

Music was little cultivated in France during the seventeenth century. It was not till near the end of it, that the genius of Lulli conferred importance upon the art. Before his time, indeed, some Italian operas had been performed at court; and some attempts had been made to set French dramatic poetry to music. But the French writers themselves admit, that, before Lulli, they had no music that deserves the name. " Lulli," says Voltaire, " fut le père de la vraie musique en France." He was an Italian by birth, but his name belongs entirely to the history of French music.

JEAN BAPTISTE LULLI, the son of a peasant in the neighbourhood of Florence, was born in 1633. As he manifested, even in his infancy, a disposition for music, a Cordelier undertook to give him some instructions in playing the guitar. At this time, the Chevalier de Guise arrived at Florence; and, having had a commission from Mademoiselle de Montpensier to find her some pretty Italian boy, to serve her as a page, he conceived that Lulli would answer the purpose, thinking that the homeliness of his appearance would be made up for by his vivacity, wit, and skill in playing on the guitar. In this, however, he was mistaken. Lulli's mean appearance did not please the lady; who, instead of retaining him about her person, sent him into her kitchen, to serve in the capacity of a *sous-marmiton*, or scullion. This was in 1646, when Lulli was thirteen years old.

In his leisure hours, he used to be scraping on a

miserable violin, to the annoyance of his fellow-servants. But it would appear that he made great progress; for a nobleman, happening to hear him, told the princess that she had a kitchen-boy of remarkable musical talents. She was induced by this report to have him regularly taught the violin; and he improved so rapidly, that he was admitted into the king's band of twenty-four violins. In a little time he was able to compose; and some of his airs attracted the notice of the king, who, on hearing him play on the violin, was so pleased with his performance, that he established a new band, and placed him at the head of it. Lulli's new band soon eclipsed the famous "four-and-twenty-fiddlers;" and it must have been no difficult matter; for such (according to M. de la Borde) was the ignorance of the musicians of that day, that they could not play a note which they had not previously got by heart. At this time, the favourite entertainments at the court of France, were *ballets*, which consisted of dancing, intermixed with dramatic action and musical recitative. Louis the Fourteenth himself used to dance in these ballets; and Lulli gained his favour by the airs which he composed for the dances, the only species of music which the king understood or relished.

Louis, however, though possessed of no taste for music, considered the establishment of an opera necessary for the splendour of his court. He was determined to have an opera in France that should surpass that of Italy. A French musical theatre, after the model of the opera of Venice, was accordingly established in 1669; and Lulli was soon afterwards appointed composer. Though coarse, both in appearance and manners,

he had not only, by this time, gained the favour of the public, but had also contrived to make himself so agreeable to the king, that he would hear no music by any other composer. The celebrated Quinault was at the same time employed to write the dramas; and the result was the production of a great many operas, the joint works of the poet and musician, which enjoyed uninterrupted favour in France for nearly a century.

After his appointment to the place of superintendant of the king's music, Lulli neglected the violin so much, that he did not even keep one in his house; and could hardly ever be prevailed upon to play, notwithstanding the earnest entreaties of the most distinguished persons about the court. The Maréchal de Grammont had a valet named Lalande, who afterwards became a great violin player. One day, after dinner, the Maréchal desired Lulli to hear Lalande, and give him a few instructions. Lalande played accordingly; but Lulli, whenever he did not please him, snatched the instrument out of his hand, began to play by way of teaching him, and worked himself up to such a pitch of enthusiasm by his own music, that he did not lay down the violin for three hours. The calling in of his servant was probably a device of the Maréchal to get Lulli to play; like the manœuvre which Mr. Russell, in his *Tour in Germany*, tells us was practised in his presence, to obtain a similar favour from Beethoven, then grown deaf and wayward. Similar things are related of others, and are very likely to happen where the musician is not a mere performer, but one who uses his instrument as the means of expressing his own ideas and feelings. With such men, sitting down to perform

is a serious matter; it is preparing to compose, as well as deliver, a piece of poetry,—requiring not only a severe intellectual labour, but attended with great excitement and consequent exhaustion. Even those musicians who are most distinguished for urbanity, find this a task to which they must be often disinclined, and for which they are often unfit; and we cannot be surprised, therefore, that such an effort should be often unwillingly made. Nor can we be surprised at the ardour with which, when the train of his ideas is once begun, and his imagination and feelings are roused, the musician pursues his occupation, or the length to which he carries it.

The favour which Lulli enjoyed during his life-time was immense. The king not only granted him a patent of nobility, but conferred on him the charge of *sécrétaire du roi* (an honorary appointment), and bestowed many other favours on him. The men of letters vied with each other in extolling him; and it was the fashion of a literary party, headed by Boileau, to exalt him at the expense of his fellow-labourer Quinault, whose poetry, though its beauties are now recognised, was treated by them with contempt. Voltaire accounts for this injustice, by saying, that the poets were jealous of the poet, but not of the musician. Boileaux reproaches Quinault with

> ——— ces lieux communs de morale lubrique,
> Que Lulli réchauffa des sons de sa musique;

though (says Voltaire), Quinault's language did much more to warm Lulli's music, than *his* notes to warm Quinault's poetry. Lulli was the *arbiter elegantiarum*

at Court, in everything relating to his art. Molière, in the comedy of *Les Fâcheux*, makes a courtier say,—

> ——— Baptiste le très-cher,
> N'a point vû ma Courante, et je vais le chercher.

The burlesque Italian poetry, introduced by Molière into his *Pourceaugnac*, and his *Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, is said to have been written for him by Lulli. It is related of Boileau, that, going into the opera-house one evening, he said to the box-keeper, "Sir, put me where I may hear the music without the words; I like Lulli's music very much, but have a supreme contempt for Quinault's verses." Quinault's verses, however, still live, and are read with pleasure; while Lulli's music is forgotten.

In 1687, Lulli composed a *Te Deum* for the king's recovery from a dangerous illness; but it caused his own death. During its performance, while beating time with the cane which he used for that purpose, he struck his toe, and the hurt, from his bad habit of body, became so alarming, that amputation of the foot was advised. He fell into the hands of a quack, however, who undertook to cure him without having recourse to this expedient; and the consequence was a mortification, which proved fatal. During his illness, his confessor refused him absolution unless he would atone for the sins of his past life by committing to the flames the opera on which he was then employed. He at first refused, but at length submitted, and pointed to the drawer which contained the score of his *Achille et Polixene*, which was accordingly taken out and thrown into the fire. He appeared to be getting better, and was thought to be out of danger. One of the young

princes de Vendôme, who was fond of him, came to pay him a visit, and, in the course of conversation said, "Why, Baptiste, have you been such a fool as to burn your new opera?" "Hush, hush!" whispered the composer, "I have got another copy of it!" This ill-timed pleasantry, unhappily, was followed by a relapse; and the prospect of death occasioned such remorse, that he submitted to the penance of being laid on a heap of ashes, with a cord about his neck. In this situation, he expressed the utmost penitence for his late transgression; and, being replaced on his bed, expired, singing to one of his own airs the words, "Il faut mourir, pecheur, il faut mourir!" This unfinished opera was completed by another composer, and published after his death.

In person, Lulli was rather thick and short. His complexion was dark, and his features very far from handsome; but his face had the expression of spirit and talent. He had not the politeness which might have been expected from so long a residence at the French court; but he was gay and good humoured, and his deportment was not without dignity. He was too much addicted to the pleasures of the table. It is related, that, when he was at the point of death, the Chevalier de Lorraine desired to see him on the plea of long friendship, and was admitted. Madame Lulli, however, with more warmth than discretion, broke out in her husband's presence with, "Yes, indeed, you are one of his best friends! It was you who last made him drunk, and are the cause of his death." "My dear wife," said Lulli, interrupting her, "M. le Chevalier was certainly the last who made me drunk, and, if I

recover, shall be the first to do so again!" He was fond of money, and left behind him a sum equal to twenty-six thousand pounds sterling—an immense sum at that period. He was called a miser by the extravagant courtiers; but his defence of his parsimony was that of a sensible man. "I will not imitate those who give costly banquets to noblemen and get laughed at for their pains." He had much vivacity and wit, and told a story with admirable humour; qualities which more than made up to his guests for the absence of splendour and profusion.

Lulli appears to have deserved his celebrity. His style was not formed upon that of his countrymen, for he left Italy too young to have acquired any musical impressions. He formed a style for himself, both in recitative and in air. His recitatives were considered by his countrymen as inimitable, while his airs were comparatively undervalued, on account of their simplicity. Voltaire, who, no musician himself, repeats the sentiments current on the subject, says that Lulli's airs did not correspond to the excellence of his great scenes:—they were too like the old Christmas-carols, or Venetian *barcaroles*; but his feeble music was sufficient for the taste of the times. His recitative, on the other hand, Voltaire continues, was so admirable, that even Rameau never could equal it. This criticism is entirely in the French taste of that day. Lulli's airs, because they had the simple and natural character of national music, were despised, when compared to those dry and elaborate productions which Rameau called airs, and which were infinitely admired by his countrymen, though without either measure or melody. Now,

Rameau's airs are intolerable even to a Frenchman; while the airs of Lulli are so easy and unaffected that they are calculated still to give pleasure to every uncorrupted taste. His music is extremely rare, and difficult to be met with; but a specimen of it,—a scene from the tragedy, opera, or serious play of *Proserpine*, —is to be found in the *Harmonicon* for 1823. It consists of an introductory symphony, an air sung by Proserpine, and a chorus of nymphs for three voices. Its effect, when performed, is charming. This specimen, it is remarked, "will show that even Purcell did not disdain to imitate the compositions of the favourite of Louis le Grand;" and the justice of the remark will be felt by every one who knows Purcell's dramatic music. Lulli, though not the inventor of opera-overtures, made great improvements in their form and style; and it is generally agreed that his style was imitated by Handel, in the overtures to many of his Italian operas.

Lulli's music kept possession of the French stage till the middle of the last century, when it was superseded by that of Rameau; who was considered as having commenced a new era in music, both by his discoveries in the science, and by his compositions. His musical system, which, for a time, was universally adopted, is now, however, recognised to be fallacious and useless; and his compositions are forgotten, even in France. And we shall afterwards see that the French are indebted, for their present excellent school, entirely to the Italian and German composers who were induced to settle among them.

CHAPTER V.

MUSIC IN ENGLAND IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.—MUSIC AT THE BEGINNING OF THE CENTURY.—MASQUES.—MILTON'S COMUS. —HENRY LAWES.—WILLIAM LAWES.—ABOLITION OF EPISCOPACY, AND DISCOURAGEMENT OF MUSIC DURING THE COMMONWEALTH. —RESTORATION. — MATTHEW LOCK. — MUSIC IN MACBETH. — BLOW.—WISE.—MACE.—MATTEIS.

Of the English music of the earlier part of the seventeenth century, which still survives, the principal portion was composed for the church, by the great harmonists whom we have already mentioned as having flourished towards the end of the sixteenth; Tallis, Bird, Morley, &c., and their successors. The music used for social amusement, at this period, consisted chiefly of *madrigals*, for a number of voices, composed, in general, by the same persons whom we have mentioned. About this time, too, those amusing little musical *jeux d'esprit*, so well known by the name of *Catches*, appear to have made their appearance. The first collection of catches that was printed in England is dated in 1609.

At that time we had no dramatic music, properly so called. It was customary, however, to have music between the acts of plays, and to introduce songs, &c., incidentally in them. The plays of Shakspeare are full of music, introduced in this way; and his beautiful allusions to its pleasures and effects are innumerable. None of the airs, however, to which his songs were originally sung, are preserved. But, from a few stray

specimens of the melody of that age, which have been preserved, we may conclude that they would afford small pleasure to modern ears.

Music received little encouragement from James the First, who had no taste for any of the fine arts. His unhappy son, Charles the First, had much pleasure in music, particularly that for the church, and was a liberal patron of musical talent. During the earlier and tranquil part of his reign, *Masques* were a favourite amusement at Court; and his queen, Henrietta, who possessed the fondness of her native country for dramatic exhibitions, frequently represented the principal character herself. These masques, which were made up of poetry, music, dancing, and splendid displays of machinery, appear, notwithstanding the queen's country, to have been chiefly of British manufacture. The poetry was generally written by Ben Jonson, then poet-laureate; the music composed by Henry Lawes; and the machinery constructed by Inigo Jones.

This fashion of representing masques gave occasion to the immortal *Comus* of Milton. It was written for the purpose of being performed by the younger members of the noble family of Bridgewater, at Ludlow Castle; and the subject of it is said to have been taken from an accident which befell these young people themselves. They had been benighted in a wood, and the lady Alice Egerton (who performed the part of *The Lady*) had been lost for some time. It was represented in 1634; and published by Lawes, the composer of the music in 1637.

Henry Lawes, at this time, enjoyed a reputation, which, though short-lived, was very brilliant. He was

employed to set to music the best lyrical poetry of the age; and the most distinguished writers vied with each other in expressing admiration of his genius. Milton, in particular, has repeatedly eulogized him in the most beautiful language. For example, in *Comus*, the attendant spirit says,

> ——— but I must put off
> These my sky robes, spun out of Iris' woof,
> And take the weed and likeness of a swain,
> That to the service of this house belongs*,
> Who, with his soft pipe, and smooth-dittied song,
> Well knows to still the wild winds when they roar,
> And hush the waving woods ———.

Notwithstanding the general admiration which Lawes's music obtained, and the praise bestowed upon it by Milton, whose natural taste had received all the cultivation which Italy could bestow, Burney speaks very contemptuously of this composer. The specimen which he has given (the song, "Sweet Echo," in *Comus*), certainly justifies, in some respects, his opinion; but this specimen is a very unfavourable one; for other songs might have been chosen, which possess pleasing melody and correct expression. His style, however, in consequence of the rapid improvement of music, soon became antiquated; and *Comus* was set a second time, very beautifully, by Dr. Arne, a century ago.

Henry Lawes had a brother, William, who was also a composer of some note. He was one of the musi-

* Lawes was then a retainer of the Bridgewater family, and played the part of the swain Thyrsis, in *Comus*.

cians of Charles the First, who was so much attached to him, that, when he was killed by a random shot at the siege of Chester, his majesty wore mourning for him. His epitaph (not at all meant to be ludicrous), is a pretty good specimen of the quibbling spirit which infected every species of composition, sermons included, in those days.

> Concord is conquer'd;—in this urn there lies
> The master of great musick's mysteries;
> And in it is a Riddle like the Cause,
> Will Lawes was slain by those whose Wills were Lawes.

The civil dissensions, which ended in the subversion of monarchy, and the death of the king, put an entire stop, for a long time, to the improvement of the fine arts in England. The liturgy of the Church of England, and the cathedral service, were abolished in 1643; the church-books were destroyed; the organs taken down; and the organists and singers belonging to the churches, turned out of their places. Nothing was allowed in the churches but the psalmody of the Presbyterians; and, as the gloomy fanaticism of the Puritans proscribed every sort of light and profane music as a pastime or amusement, the art, for a time, may be said to have been banished from the land. Cromwell himself, however, was fond of music, and frequently indulged himself in hearing it. When the organ at Magdalen College, Oxford, was taken down, he ordered it to be conveyed to Hampton Court, where it was placed in the great gallery; and one of his favourite amusements was hearing it played upon. It was carried back to its original place after the Restoration.

The gossipping annalist, Anthony à Wood, tells a story of a student of Christ-church, James Quin, who had been turned out of his place, and restored to it in consequence of Cromwell hearing him sing. "Being well acquainted" says Wood, "with some great men of those times that loved musick, they introduced him into the company of Oliver Cromwell, the Protector, who loved a good voice and instrumental music well. He heard him sing with very great delight; liquored him with sack, and in conclusion, said, Mr. Quin, you have done very well,—what shall I do for you? To which Quin made answer, with great compliments, of which he had command, with a great grace, that his highness would be pleased to restore him to his student's place; which he did accordingly, and so kept it to his dying day."

Milton, notwithstanding his hostility to episcopacy, and his zeal in behalf of the Presbyterian party, was not only a passionate lover of music, but has, in his *Penseroso*, given us a most beautiful description of that very species of music, the use of which he contributed to abolish:

> But let my due feet never fail
> To walk the cloister's studious pale,
> And love the high embower'd roof,
> With antique pillars massy proof,
> And storied windows richly dight,
> Casting a dim religious light.
> There let the pealing organ blow
> To the full-voiced choir below,
> In service high, and anthem clear,
> As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
> Dissolve me into ecstacies,
> And bring all Heav'n before mine eyes.

Cromwell and Milton, though they thus concurred in proscribing the use, in churches, of an art, to the charms of which the one was far from insensible, and the other devotedly attached, certainly acted from very different motives. Cromwell gained distinction, and at last, supreme power, by following the signs of the times, and affecting a degree of fanaticism which did not really belong to his character. Milton had imbibed opinions hostile to the government of the established church, long before there was any prospect of its subversion; and when the contest began, his share in it was the result of those opinions. Their soundness may well be questioned; but his character forbids the slightest doubt of their sincerity.

At the Restoration, some of the gentlemen of Charles the First's Chapel, who still survived, were replaced in their former station. Among these was Henry Lawes, who, however, survived the Restoration but a short time. Though Charles the Second restored the musical establishment of his chapel, and increased their salaries, yet his characteristic negligence seems to have been exhibited in this, as well as in other departments of his administration. In Pepys's *Diary*, under the date of December 19th, 1666, there is this entry: "Talked of the king's family with Mr. Hingston the organist. He says many of the musique are ready to starve, they being five years behind-hand for their wages: nay, Evans, the famous man upon the harp, having not his equal in the world, did the other day die from mere want, and was fain to be buried at the alms of the parish."

The taste of Charles the Second, in music, as in every thing else, was French. He had French operas performed at court, and established a band of twenty-four violins, in imitation of the king's band at Paris,—which gave occasion to D'Urfey's famous song of "Four-and-twenty fiddlers all in a row." Italian music, however, began now to be heard a little in England. This appears from the following passage in Pepys's *Diary:* "January 12th, 1667. With my lord Brouncke to his house, there to hear some Italian musique, and here we met Tom Killigrew, Sir Robert Murray, and the Italian, Signor Baptista*, who hath proposed a play in Italian for the opera, which Sir T. Killigrew do intend to have up; and here he did sing one of the acts. He himself is the poet as well as the musician, and did sing the whole from the words without any musique prickt, and played all along upon a harpsicon, most admirably, and the composition most excellent. The words I did not understand, and so know not how they are fitted, but believe very well, and all in the recitativo very fine. But I perceive there is a proper accent in every country's discourse, and that do reach in their setting of notes to words, which, therefore, cannot be natural to any body else but them; so that I am not so much smitten with it as it may be I should be if I were acquainted with their accent. But the whole composition is certainly most excellent; and the poetry, Sir T. Killigrew and Sir R. Murray, who understood the words, did say most excellent. I confess I was

* Baptista Draghi, an eminent Italian dramatic composer.

mightily pleased with the musique*." What follows contains a good account of the state of music in England at that time. "He (Sir T. Killigrew) tells me that he hath gone several times (eight or ten times he tells me) hence to Rome, to hear good musique; so much he loves it, though he never did sing or play a note. That he hath ever endeavoured, in the late king's time, and in this, to introduce good musique; but he never could do it, there never having been any musique here better than ballads and songs, 'Hermitt Poore,' and 'Chiny Chase,' (qu. Chevy Chase?) was all the musique we had; and yet no ordinary fiddlers get so much money as ours do here, which speaks our rudeness still."

Some amusing sketches of the state of music, as well as manners, in England at this period, are given by Anthony à Wood. He was himself a good sample of a musical amateur of that day. He was born at Oxford in 1632; and, in his life written by himself, he says that in 1651 "He began to exercise his natural and unsatiable genie to musick. He exercised his hand on the violin, and having a good eare to take any tune at first hearing, he could quickly draw it out from the violin, but not with the same tuning of strings that others used. He wanted understanding, friends, and money, to pick him out a good master, otherwise he might have equalled on that instrument and in singing any person then in the university. He had some companions that were musical, but they wanted instruction as well as he." He afterwards, however,

* It does not appear, however, that this Italian Opera was ever represented.

obtained a master, and learned to tune his fiddle like other people. "Having by 1654 obtained a proficiency in music, he and his companions were not without silly frolicks not now to be maintained." These frolicks consisted in strolling about fairs disguised like country fiddlers playing to get their living. On one occasion, after getting money, victuals, and drink, in return for their labours, they were overtaken on their way home by some soldiers, who forced them to fiddle for their amusement in an open field, and then went off without giving them a penny. "Most of his companions," says Anthony, "would afterwards glory in this, but he was ashamed, and could never endure to hear of it."

Oxford seems to have been a very musical place in those days. By 1656, Wood tells us that "He had a genuine skill in musick, and frequented the weekly meeting of musitians in the house of Will. Ellis, organist of St. John's Coll. situated on that place whereon the theatre was built." He gives an account of the persons who attended these meetings. One of these was "Mr. Low, a proud man, who could not endure any common musitian to come to the meeting, much less play among them." "Of this kind," continues Anthony, "I must rank Jos. Haselwood, an apothecary, a starch'd formal clister pipe, who usually played on the base-viol, and sometimes on the counter-tenor. He was very conceited of his skill (tho' he had but little of it) and therefore would be ever and anon ready to take up a viol before his betters; which being observed by all, they usually called him *Handlewood*." "The gentlemen in private meetings," he afterwards says, "which A. W. frequented, played three, four, and five

parts with viols, as treble-viol, counter-tenor, and bass, with an organ, virginal, or harpsicon, joyned with them; and they esteemed a violin to be an instrument only belonging to a common fiddler, and could not endure that it should come among them, for feare of making their meetings to be vaine and fidling. But before the restoration of King Charles II., and especially after viols began to be out of fashion, and only violins used, as treble violin, tenor and base violin; and the king, according to the French mode, would have twenty-four violins playing before him, while he was at meales, as being more airie and brisk than viols. In the latter end of the year 1657, Davis Mell, the most eminent violinist of London, and clock-maker, being in Oxon, Peter Pitt, Will. Bull, Kerr Digby, and others of Allsoules, as also Ant. W. did give a very handsome entertainment in the taverne called the *Salutation*. The company did look on Mr. Mell to have a prodigious hand on the violin, and they thought that no person, as all in London did, could go beyond him."

But the people both of London and Oxford were enlightened on the subject of the violin by the arrival of THOMAS BALTZAR of Lubeck, whose powers surpassed anything as yet known in England. "Thomas Baltzar," says Wood, "a Lubecker borne, and the most famous artist for the violin that the world had yet produced, was now in Oxon, and this day, July 24, A. W. was with him and Mr. Edward Low, lately organist of Christ Church, at the house of William Ellis. A. W. did then and there, to his very great astonishment, heare him play on the violin. He then saw him run

up his fingers to the end of the finger-board of the violin, and run them back insensibly, and all with alacrity and in very good tune, which he nor any in England saw the like before. A. W. entertained him and Mr. Low with what the house could then afford, and afterwards he invited them to the taverne; but they being engaged to goe to other company, he could no more heare him play or see him play at that time. Afterwards he came to one of the weekly meetings at Mr. Ellis's house, and he played to the wonder of all the auditory; and exercising his finger and instrument several wayes to the utmost of his power; Wilson thereupon, the public professor, the greatest judge of musicke that ever was, did, after his humoursome way, stoop down to Baltzar's feet, to see whether he had a huff on, that is to say, to see whether he was a devil or not, because he acted beyond the parts of man.

"About this time it was that Dr. John Wilkins, warden of Wadham, the greatest *curioso* of his time, invited him and some of the musitians to his lodgings in that college, purposely to have a consort, and to heare and see him play. The instruments and books were carried thither, but none could be persuaded there to play against him in consort on the violin. At length the company perceiving A. W. standing behind in a corner neare the doore, they haled him in among them, and play, forsooth, he must against him. Whereupon he not being able to avoid it, he took up a violin, as poore Troylus did against Achilles. He, abashed at it, yet honour he got by playing with and against such a grand master as Baltzar was. Mr. Davis Mell was accounted hitherto the best for the violin in England;

but after Baltzar came into England, and showed his most wonderful parts on that instrument, Mell was not so admired, yet he played sweeter, was a well-bred gentleman, and not given to excessive drinking as Baltzar was."

At the Restoration, Baltzar was placed at the head of the king's band of violins. He died in 1663. Wood says, that, "This person being much beloved by all lovers of musick, his company was therefore desired; *and company, especially musical company, delighting in drinking*, made him drink more than ordinary, which brought him to the grave." We believe that musical company is now as free as any other from the reproach of intemperance. Music, indeed, as now cultivated by every class of society, instead of being a temptation, is a preservation from vicious indulgences.

The most distinguished musician of the reign of Charles the Second, was MATTHEW LOCK. He was a native of Exeter, and a chorister in the cathedral of that city. He appears, early in life, to have acquired reputation; as we find that he was employed to compose the music for the public entry of the king, at the Restoration; and that he was soon afterwards appointed composer in ordinary to his majesty. The history of his life is without interest; he appears to have been of an irascible, rough, and disputatious temper, and to have been, consequently, engaged in petty controversies, which are not worth recording. He composed the music to several dramatic pieces. Of these, the *Tempest* and *Psyche* were published in 1673. They are very much in the French style of the day; and the composer was probably induced, by the predilection of

the king for that style, to take Lulli for his model. In the celebrated music in *Macbeth*, however, which was produced in 1674, he appears to have freed himself from these trammels; and to have followed the impulse of his own bold and original genius. Burney speaks of the "rude and wild excellence" of this music. Of its excellence one cannot speak too highly; but the epithet "rude" is surely misapplied. Its masses of harmony are very grand and imposing, and, at the same time, clear, simple, and correct; while there is, in the melodies, a smoothness and flow, of which the music of that time affords no other example. The words are set with great judgment and propriety; so that the music, as in the passage, "Speak, sisters, speak, is the deed done?" heightens the energy of the declamation; and, in the song, "Let's have a dance upon the heath," there is as much airiness as if it had been written within these twenty years. Lock's music has been performed at every representation of the play, since the period of its composition to the present day; it has resisted the influence of time and the changes of fashion, and continues to be heard with unabated pleasure,—a proof, notwithstanding the numerous apparent instances to the contrary, that there are *permanent* beauties in music, as well as in poetry, or painting; and that musicians may hope to write for immotality, when once they seek the beauties of their art in the immutable laws of nature and reason,—when once they give their attention to the symmetry, grace, and expression of the *figure* itself, instead of the fashion of its attire.

Among the musicians who flourished during the

reigns of Charles the Second, and his successor, one of the most distinguished was Dr. JOHN BLOW; many of whose compositions for the church are much esteemed, and still performed in our cathedrals. He wrote in a bold, and often in a grand style; but his harmony was incorrect, and he indulged in crude and harsh combinations. He composed many songs and ballads, all of which are forgotten, except his "Go, perjured man," which we had occasion to mention in speaking of the music of Carissimi.

MICHAEL WISE was also an eminent composer for the church, and has left some admirable anthems. The famous duet, "Old Chiron thus preached to his pupil Achilles," is of his composition. Wise, who seems to have possessed the habits of too many of the tuneful tribe, was killed by a watchman, in a street-brawl at Salisbury, in 1687.

Some notice is due to THOMAS MACE, the author of a very singular work, entitled *Music's Monument*, published in 1676. Mace had some merit as a performer on the lute, and a composer for that instrument; and his book contains, not only instructions for performing on the lute, but a dissertation on music in general, written in a style of unparalleled absurdity. He tells us, that the psalm-singing at the siege of York, in 1644, "Was the most excellent that has been known or remembered any where in these our latter ages. Abundance of people of the best rank and quality being shut up in the city, namely, lords, knights, and gentlemen of the countries round about, besides the soldiers and citizens, who, all or most of them, came constantly every Sunday to hear public prayers and

sermon, the number was so exceeding great, that the church was (as I may say) even *cramming* and *squeezing-full*. Now here you must take notice that they had then a custom in that church (which I hear not of in any other cathedral which was), that always before the *sermon*, the *whole congregation sang a psalm*, together, with the quire and the organ; and you must also know, that there was then a *most excellent-large-plump-lusty-full-speaking organ*, which cost (as I am credibly informed) *a thousand pounds*. This *organ*, I say (when the psalm was set before the sermon), being let out into all its *fulness of* stops, together with the *quire*, began the psalm. But when that *vast-con-chording unity* of the whole *congregational-chorus*, came (as I may say) *thundering in*, even so as it made the very *ground shake* under us; (*oh the unutterable ravish-ing soul's delight!*) in the which I was so *transported*, and wrapped up into *high contemplation*, that there was no room left in my *whole man*, namely, *body* and *spirit*, for any thing below *divine* and *heavenly raptures*."

In this inimitable style Master Mace generally writes; but the following passage is an exception, and is, we think, very pleasing. Speaking of a little air, or lesson, for the lute, he says, "It is this very winter just forty years since I made it; and yet it is new because all like it; and then when I was past being a suiter to my best-beloved, dearest and sweetest living mistress, but not married, yet contriving the best and readiest way towards it, and thus it was. That very night in which I was thus agitated in my mind concerning her, my living mistress, she being in Yorkshire and myself at Cambridge, close shut up in my chamber, still and

quiet, about ten or eleven o'clock at night, musing and writing letters to her, her mother, and some other friends; in summing up and determining the whole matter concerning our marriage; you may conceive I might have very intent thoughts all that time, and might meet with some difficulties, for as yet I had not gained her mother's consent, so that in my writings I was sometimes put to my studyings. At which times, my lute lying on my table, I sometimes took it up and walked about my chamber, letting my fancy drive which way it would, for I studied nothing at that time as to musick; yet my secret genius or fancy prompted my fingers, do what I could, into this very humour, so that every time I walked and took up my lute, in the interim betwixt writing and studying, this ayre would needs offer itself unto me continually; insomuch, that at the last, liking it well, and lest it should be lost, I took paper and set it down, taking no further notice of at that time; but afterwards it passed abroad for a very pleasant and delightful ayre among all; yet I gave it no name till a long time after; nor taking more notice of it in any particular kind, than of any other my composures of that nature. But after I was married, and had brought my wife home to Cambridge, it so fell out that one rainy morning I staid within, and in my chamber my wife and I were all alone; she intent upon her needle works, and I playing upon my lute at the table by her. She sat very still and quiet, listening to all I played, without a word a long time, till at last I happened to play this lesson, which, as soon as I had once played, she earnestly desired me to play it again; 'For,' said she, 'that shall be called my lesson.' From

which words, so spoken with emphasis and accent, it presently came into my remembrance the time when, and the occasion of its being produced, and returned her this answer, namely, that it may very properly be called your lesson, for when I composed it you were wholly in my fancy, and the chief object and ruler of my thoughts; telling her how and when it was made; and, therefore, ever after, I thus called it my mistress, and most of my scholars since call it 'Mrs. Mace' to this day."

This is a sweet picture of domestic happiness; and it is curious to observe, that the old man, looking back, at the distance of forty years, to the happiest moments of his youth, uses the simple language of tenderness and feeling, and

Projicit ampullas et sesquipedalia verba.

Mace appears to have lived to a great age,—a consequence, probably, of the innocent life and the gentle and cheerful disposition which his writings indicate. From a curious advertisment of his, preserved in the British Museum, and quoted by Burney, it appears that he was alive in 1690, when he was seventy-seven years of age.

Another musician of that age deserves notice, as being the first really good performer on the violin, and composer for that instrument, who appeared in England, and as having introduced the *engraving* of music into this country. This was NICOLA MATTEIS,—an Italian who came to England in the latter part of the reign of Charles the Second. In the manuscript *Memoirs of Music*, written by the honourable Roger

North, brother of the lord-keeper North, to which Dr. Burney had access, and which supplied him with much information, there is the following account of this musician:

"The decay of French music, and favour of the Italian, came on by degrees. Its beginning was accidental, and occasioned by the arrival of Nicola Matteis. He was an excellent musician, and performed wonderfully on the violin. His manner was singular, but he excelled, in one respect, all that had been heard in England before: his manner of bowing, his shakes, divisions, and, indeed, his whole style of performance was surprising, and every stroke of his bow was a mouthful. All he played was of his own composition, which manifested him to be a very exquisite harmonist, and of a boundless fancy and invention.

"When he first came here he was very poor, but not so poor as proud, which prevented his being heard, or making useful acquaintance for a long time, except among a few merchants in the city, who patronised him*. And setting a high value on his condescension, he made them indemnify him for the want of more general favour. By degrees, however, he was more noticed, and was introduced to perform at court. But his demeanour did not please, and he was thought capricious and troublesome, as he took offence, if any one whispered when he played, which was a kind of attention that had not been much in fashion at our court. It was said that the duke of Richmond would

* The *city* is still distinguished for its liberal patronage of music, and for the great number of its able and intelligent *dilettanti*.

have settled a pension upon him, though he wished him to change his manner of playing, and would needs have one of his pages show him a better. Matteis, for the sake of the jest, condescended to take lessons of the page, but learned so fast, that he soon outran him in his own way.

"But he continued so outrageous in his demands, particularly for his solos, that few would comply with them, and he remained in narrow circumstances and obscurity a long while. Nor would his superior talents ever have contributed to better his fortune, had it not been for the zeal and friendly offices of two or three *dilettanti*, his admirers. These, becoming acquainted with him, and courting him in his own way, had an opportunity of describing to him the temper of the English; who, if humoured would be liberal; but, if uncivilly treated, would be sulky, and despise him and his talents: assuring him that by a little complaisance he would neither want employment nor money. By advice so reasonable, they at length brought him into such good temper, that he became generally esteemed and sought after.

"After this, he discovered a way of acquiring money, which was then perfectly new in this country. For, observing how much his scholars admired the lessons he composed for them, which were all duos, and that most musical gentlemen who heard them wished to have copies of them, he was at the expense of having them neatly engraved on copperplates, in oblong octavo, which was the beginning of engraving music in England: and these he presented, well bound, to lovers of the art, and admirers of his

talents, for which he often received three, four, and five guineas. And so great were his encouragement and profits in this species of traffic, that he printed four several books of *Ayres for the Violin*, in the same form and size."

Burney tells us, that Matteis' reputation and abilities having enabled him to accumulate wealth, or to live in splendour, he chose the latter, took a great house, and lived so luxuriously, that he brought on diseases which soon put an end to his life.

Making allowance for Mr. North's want of opportunity to know what were the powers of a great violin-player, by comparing Matteis with the great players, who had, by this time, appeared in Italy, there can be no doubt, from the above description, that Matteis must have infinitely surpassed any player who had hitherto been heard in England. Matteis, however, though his own performance was much esteemed, does not appear to have formed other good violin-players in England. Mr. North mentions that, in his own time, his compositions, from their difficulty, were thought impracticable; and that, while the lovers of music admired his playing, no one else pretended to do the like. The instrumental compositions of Purcell at this period were evidently written for performers quite unacquainted with the powers of the violin.

It only remains, in treating of the English music of the seventeenth century, to speak of PURCELL, the greatest musician whom England has produced, during that, or any other period.

CHAPTER VI.

PURCELL.

HENRY PURCELL was born in the year 1658. His father, Henry Purcell, was a musician of some note, and one of the gentlemen of the Chapel-royal, as established by Charles the Second at the Restoration. There is a song, for three voices, of his composition, in Playford's *Musical Companion*, which does not indicate much genius. —He had a brother, Thomas, who was also a gentleman of the Chapel-royal. Dr. Boyce, in his great collection of cathedral music, has preserved a chant, by him, called *The Burial Chant*, which is simple and melancholy in its expression.

Purcell lost his father when he was only six years old. It is not ascertained who was his first instructor in music; but, most probably, it was Cook, who was master of the children of the chapel at the time of his father's death. He afterwards received lessons from the celebrated Dr. Blow; a circumstance that was considered of so much importance in the life of that composer, that, in the inscription on his tomb it is mentioned that he was "Master to the famous Mr. Henry Purcell."

Purcell resembled Mozart, in the precocity of his genius, as well as the shortness of his life. While yet a singing-boy in the King's Chapel, and before he could have been taught anything more than the elements of

singing, the force of his genius enabled him to produce several anthems, so beautiful, that they have been preserved, and are still sung in our cathedrals. To be able to produce a piece of correct and regular harmony, however simple, even in the case of superior minds, is generally the result of long study and application; but to beings like Purcell and Mozart music seems to have no rules. What others consider the most profound and learned combinations, are, with them, the dictates of imagination and feeling, as much as the simplest strain of melody.

In 1676, when only in his eighteenth year, Purcell was appointed organist of Westminster Abbey, then, as now, a situation of dignity and importance. At the age of nineteen, he composed the music of a drama, called *Dido and Eneas*, which was considered so excellent, that any composer then in England would have thought it an honour to be the author of it. Some parts of it, indeed, would do honour to any composer who has come after him. This piece was written at the desire of a dancing master of some eminence, of the name of Priest, who seems to have been a person of more than ordinary taste. He got Tate to write the drama, and Purcell to set it to music; and it was represented by the young gentlewomen who attended his school, to a select party of their parents and friends, with great applause, a considerable portion of which fell to the share of the composer. At twenty-four, he was advanced to one of the three places of organist of the Chapel-royal.

In the year 1683, Purcell published twelve sonatas for the violin, in which he professed to imitate the style

of the Italian masters, who had produced compositions of this kind. At that time the works of Corelli were not known in England; and Purcell's model was, probably, Bassani, who was Corelli's master. These compositions are worthy of preservation and occasional performance, as they will please from their ingenuity of contrivance, and from the excellent modulations, and good traits of melody, in which they abound, notwithstanding the want of knowledge of the powers of the instrument which they indicate. But it is impossible to compose, with effect, for any instrument, without being a masterly performer on it. It is by the hand upon the instrument that new and original passages are suggested; and those who have not this advantage either write passages that are awkward and ineffective, or, in wishing to avoid this fault, are constrained to adhere to a timid imitation of the passages which they find in the works of able performers. From inattention to this, much talent has been wasted, and a great deal of estimable music produced in vain; for no music for the harpsichord, piano-forte, violin, or violoncello, has been successful, unless when composed by powerful or original performers on those instruments.

At the time, however, when Purcell composed these sonatas, the powers of the violin were unknown to everybody in England, as much as to him; and they had merit enough to make them be well received by the public. He was, therefore, induced to publish another set, one of which was considered so excellent, that it obtained the name of *The Golden Sonata;* and it is easy to see, that in those days, its effect must have been highly novel and delightful.

Purcell's ecclesiastical education led him to the composition of anthems, and other pieces for the church; which were so admirable, and became so numerous, that his fame soon spread over all parts of the kingdom. One of the most celebrated of his anthems was composed as a thanksgiving by Charles the Second for an escape from shipwreck. Being on board a pleasure-yacht, with his brother, the duke of York, they encountered a tremendous storm, and were in imminent danger; which produced such an impression on the king's mind, that, with a feeling of piety too little usual with him, he selected some appropriate verses, and ordered Purcell to set them as an anthem of thanksgiving. To this circumstance we owe the sublime "They that go down to the sea in Ships." * In 1687, when James the

* This remarkable incident is thus related by Sir John Hawkins:—"The king had given orders for building a yacht, which, as soon as it was finished, he named 'the Fubbs,' in honour of the duchess of Portsmouth, who, we may suppose, was in her person, rather full and plump. The painters and sculptors apply this epithet to children, and say, for instance, of the boys of Fiammengo, that they are fubby. Soon after the vessel was launched, the king made a party to sail in this yacht down the river and round the Kentish coast; and to keep up the mirth and good humour of the company, Mr. Gostling (a public singer of great repute) was requested to be of the party. They had got as low as the North Foreland, when a violent storm arose in which the king and the duke of York were necessitated, in order to preserve the vessel, to hand the sails, and work like common seamen. By good providence, however, they escaped to land; but the distress they were in made an impression on the mind of Mr. Gostling which was never effaced. Struck with a just sense of the deliverance, and the horror of the scene which he had but lately viewed, upon his return from London he selected from the

Second issued a proclamation for a thanksgiving on account of the supposed pregnancy of the queen, Purcell was chosen, as the greatest musician in England, to compose an anthem on the occasion; and he accordingly produced that which begins "Blessed are they which fear the Lord," and which is justly accounted a great and masterly work.

The noblest, however, of all Purcell's sacred compositions is his *Te Deum* and *Jubilate;* a magnificent piece of choral music, with accompaniments, for the first time in England, for an instrumental orchestra. Various opinions have been held concerning the occasion of this great work. It has been said that it was composed for the opening of the new cathedral of St. Paul's, though Purcell did not live to see that event. But Dr. Burney has set the matter at rest, by quoting the title of the printed copy preserved in the library of Christ Church, Oxford; "*Te Deum* and *Jubilate*, for voices and instruments, made for St. Cecilia's day, 1694, by Henry Purcell." This admirable composition was constantly performed at St. Paul's, on the feast of the Sons of the Clergy, from the death of the author, in 1695, till the

Psalms those passages which declare the wonders and terrors of the deep, and gave them to Purcell to compose an anthem, which he did, adapting it so peculiarly to the compass of Mr. Gostling's voice, which was a deep bass, that hardly any person but himself was then, or has since been able to sing it; but the king did not live to hear it. This anthem, though never printed, is well known. It is taken from the 107th Psalm; the two first verses of the anthem are the 23rd and 24th of the Psalm, 'They that go down to the sea in ships, and occupy business in great waters, These men see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep.'"—*Hawkins, Vol. IV. p.* 359.

year 1713, when Handel's *Te Deum*, for the peace of Utrecht was produced, by order of Queen Anne. From this time they seem to have been performed alternately; till 1743, when Handel composed his second and most magnificent *Te Deum* for the battle of Dettingen. Since that time Purcell's *Te Deum* has been very seldom used; a circumstance to be regretted, but not to be wondered at, as the stupendous *Dettingen Te Deum* has thrown into the shade all former compositions of that nature.

Purcell's genius was not limited to the ecclesiastical style. Like Mozart in this, as in many other respects, he was equally great in his compositions for the church, the theatre, and the chamber. The only dissimilarity between them, in this respect, was, that Purcell was not like Mozart, equally great as a composer of instrumental music. Mozart was born at a time when instrumental music had been carried to great perfection, and was not only a great performer on the piano-forte, but had studied the powers and aptitudes of almost every other instrument. But Purcell could neither become a great instrumental performer himself, nor acquire a knowledge of the powers of instruments; because, in his day, no such knowledge existed in England.

The occasion of Purcell's first dramatic essay has already been mentioned. The excellence and success of the music of *Dido and Eneas* drew the attention of the managers of the theatres towards him; they made him proposals, to which, by the advice of his friend Priest, he listened.

About this time, dramatic performances, called operas, began to be introduced in England. The name of this entertainment was borrowed from the Italians; but it

differed from the Italian opera in this, that the dialogue was merely declaimed, or spoken, and songs and instrumental pieces were introduced at intervals, while, in the Italian opera, the whole performance was in music. Indeed we have never had, in England, an entertainment corresponding to the opera of the Italians; for, even to this day, our operas are merely plays, in which the dialogue is intermixed with songs and concerted pieces. The few attempts that have been made to introduce recitative upon the English stage, have not been so successful as to lead to its adoption. The only opera of this kind that acquired popularity, was *Artaxerxes*, which is a translation of the opera of Metastasio; but its success is to be ascribed to the pleasing character of the airs, and certainly not to the felicity of the attempt to clothe English poetry in recitative. That the English language, however, is capable of recitative, there can be no doubt; though the attempt to compose an entire drama, in this style, has never yet been made by any one capable of the task. But, had Purcell ever had an opportunity of throwing the more impassioned parts of the dialogue into recitative, we are persuaded he would have altered the history of our musical drama: for, in the recitative which he has introduced in many of his compositions, he has seized, so happily, the emphasis, accents, and inflections of English speech, as to heighten the energy of the passion or sentiment conveyed by the words.

In Purcell's time, however, the task of the composer for the stage was merely to write the music for such songs, &c., as were scattered, at intervals, through the play. Of this kind of music we have already mentioned

that which was written for the *Tempest*, and *Macbeth*, by Lock. In 1677, D'Avenant wrote a dramatic opera, called *Circe*, the music of which was composed by John Banister, the king's first violin-player. The prologue was written by Dryden, and the epilogue by the earl of Rochester. In 1678, Dryden wrote an opera, taken from the *Paradise Lost* of Milton, and called *The State of Innocence and Fall of Man;* a production unworthy of him. It was never represented. In 1685, the last year of Charles the Second's reign, Dryden produced a sort of political play, which he calls an opera, entitled *Albion and Albanius;* the object of which was to support the interest of the government, by satirizing what was considered the democratical and fanatical spirit, which, by that time, was beginning to shake the throne of the Stuarts. To render this piece still more agreeable to his royal master, Dryden had it set by an obscure French musician, of the name of Grabut, whom he eulogizes in the preface. The king, however, died before this piece was brought on the stage; and, when it did appear, its success was not considerable. It could not, indeed, have been great, whatever might have been the merit of the play, considering its tendency, as contrasted with the temper of the times.

The preface to this piece, notwithstanding the author's injustice in lauding an obscure French musician of no merit, to the prejudice of Purcell, is characterized by Dryden's usual excellence in this species of writing. Though he scarcely could have ever seen or heard an Italian opera, yet the clearness of his conceptions, as to what ought to be the form and construction of these dramas, is admirable. In this preface Dryden mentions,

that "This opera was only intended as a prologue to a play of the nature of the *Tempest;* which is a tragedy mixed with opera, or a drama written in blank verse, adorned with scenes, machines, songs, and dances; so that the fable of it is all spoken and acted by the best of the comedians; the other part of the entertainment to be performed by the same singers and dancers who are introduced in this present opera." Dr. Burney says: "The tragedy here alluded to was *King Arthur*, which was not performed till about the year 1690."

Dryden appears, by this time, to have been convinced of Purcell's pre-eminent excellence; for the music, both in the *Tempest* and in *King Arthur*, was composed by him. Purcell's music is still introduced when the *Tempest* is performed; and *King Arthur* was, a few years ago, revived, under the title of *Arthur and Emmeline*, with great success.

The play of *Dioclesian, or the Prophetess*, altered from Beaumont and Fletcher, with music by Purcell, was performed in 1690, and published in 1691, with a dedication by the composer to the duke of Somerset, in which he says, "Music is yet in its nonage,—a forward child, which gives hopes of what he may be hereafter in England, when the masters of it shall find more encouragement. It is now," he continues, "learning Italian, which is its best master, and studying a little of the French air, to give it somewhat more of gaiety and fashion." In accordance with these sentiments, he made the great Italian masters, particularly Carissimi and Stradella, his models; and his works afford indications of his having studied the compositions of Lulli. In another place, he has admirably expressed his

opinion of the Italian music, and given his reasons for imitating it:—"For its author, he has faithfully endeavoured a *just* imitation of the most far-famed Italian masters, principally to bring the seriousness and gravity of that kind of music into vogue and reputation among our countrymen, whose humour, 'tis time now should begin to loathe the levity and balladry of our neighbours. The attempt he confesses to be bold and daring; there being pens and artists of more eminent abilities,—much better qualified for the employment than his or himself, which he hopes these weak endeavours will, in due time, provoke and inflame to a more accurate undertaking. He is not ashamed to own his unskilfulness in the Italian language, but that is the unhappiness of his education, which cannot justly be counted his fault; however, he thinks he may warrantably affirm, that he is not mistaken in the power of the Italian notes, or the elegancy of their compositions." There is much meaning in the phrase, "a *just* imitation of the Italian masters:" Purcell's imitation did not consist in stringing together fragments of Italian melody, and trying to force these into a union with English words. He studied the genius of the Italian music; observed that its excellencies consisted in its smoothness and expression, and in the exquisite adaptation of the melody to what may be called the accent and modulation of the Italian language; and he endeavoured to give to his own music corresponding qualities. It thus arises, that Purcell's music, while it does possess the excellencies of the Italian music which he studied, is perfectly original, and much more truly and essen-

tially English than that of any composer who has appeared before or since.

Among the other dramatic pieces to which Purcell furnished the music, were the following:—*The Fairy Queen*, altered from Shakspeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream; Timon of Athens; Bonduca; The Libertine;* and *Don Quixote.* He also composed the music of a masque, which was introduced in the tragedy of *Œdipus*, when it was revived in 1692; and a musical entertainment, performed on St. Cecilia's day, November 22, 1693, which was published, in score, by Playford.

The remainder of his compositions consist of a great number of single songs and duets, pieces for the harpsichord, airs for ballads, and glees and catches.

Little has been recorded, and there was probably little to record, concerning the circumstances of Purcell's life. From the number and variety of his compositions, he must have been much devoted to the exercise of his art; though he appears to have been gay and good-humoured, and of social habits. He is accused, indeed, and it would seem with too much foundation, of having been led by this disposition to form intimacies with mean and dissolute persons, to the injury both of his health and circumstances. Among his companions of this stamp was the celebrated Tom Brown, so well known for his wit and profligacy. Brown absolutely lived in alehouses and taverns, employing his ingenuity in baffling his creditors and their emissaries, the bailiffs; and Purcell, with others who delighted in the brilliancy of his conversation, were too often the partakers of his vigils. The house of one Owen Swan, a vintner, in Bartholo-

mew-lane, called Cobweb-hall, was also a favourite resort of the musical wits of the day; as likewise was a house in Wych-street, in the Strand, which, for a very long time after, was distinguished by the sign of Purcell's head;—a very good half-length portrait of the composer, in a brown coat, full-bottomed wig, and green cap.

Purcell's intercourse with society, however, was by no means limited to persons of the above description. The lord-keeper North, and other persons of rank, were among his friends. Pepys, in his *Diary*, speaks of being in his society. Dryden was warmly attached to him,—an attachment arising partly from kindred genius and their connexion in the capacities of poet and musician, and partly from Purcell having been the master of the poet's wife, the lady Elizabeth Howard, daughter of the earl of Berkshire.

He died on the 21st of November, 1695, at the age of thirty-seven. His death is commonly ascribed to a cold, occasioned by being kept too long at his own door, one evening, when he came home. It is said that his wife, provoked at his habit of keeping late hours, had ordered the servants not to admit him after midnight. Unfortunately he came home from a tavern, heated with wine, beyond the prescribed hour, was kept for some time at the door, in a cold night, and contracted the disease of which he died. This story, so shocking to the memory of his widow, does not seem to be authenticated, and we are not inclined to believe it. If she could have treated her husband with such harshness as to cause his death, the expressions of grief and tenderness, in her dedication to lady Elizabeth Howard, prefixed to the posthumous publication of his works, must have been a piece of

hypocrisy revolting to everybody, at a time when, if there was any foundation for the story, it must have been well known. Besides, Purcell, in his will, made on his death-bed, and dated on the 1st of November, after reciting that he was in sound mind, though very ill in constitution, leaves all his effects to his loving wife Frances, and appoints her his sole executrix; a mark of his love and affection, which he would hardly have shown, had he felt himself dying in consequence of her unkind treatment. It may be added, that his phrase, ill *in constitution*, corroborates the opinion that his death was occasioned by a consumption or decline, probably produced, or at least aggravated, by intemperance and irregular hours.

It is not known what was the number of Purcell's children. He had a son, Edward, who was bred a musician, became an indifferent organist, and died about the year 1751. That he had more children may be inferred from his widow's dedication already mentioned, in which she expresses her gratitude to lady Elizabeth Howard for having extended her generosity *to his posterity;* and the same phrase confirms the inference which may be made from the irregularity of his habits, that he had left his family ill provided for.

He was buried in Westminster Abbey. In the dedication already quoted, his widow says that "Her ladyship had generously prevented her intended performance of the duty she owed his ashes, by erecting a fair monument over him, and gracing it with an inscription which may perpetuate both the marble and his memory." From this it might be concluded, even did the inscription not afford intrinsic evidence of the fact,

that it was the production of Dryden. No epitaph has ever surpassed it in beauty.

Here lies
HENRY PURCELL, Esq.
Who left this life
And is gone to that blessed place
Where only his own harmony can be exceeded.
Obiit 21mo. die Novembris,
Anno ætatis suæ 37mo.
Annoque Domini 1695.

The works of Purcell are still dear to every lover of English music; and we are convinced that time, in place of consigning them to oblivion, will render them more and more popular. A number of his finest anthems are contained in Dr. Boyce's great collection of cathedral music; and there is hardly any recent collection of sacred music in which some of his productions are not to be found. The publications of his compositions for the church, in his own time, are exceedingly rare and difficult of access. But Mr. Novello, who has so highly distinguished himself by his noble editions of the masses of Haydn and Mozart, the Fitzwilliam music, &c. has recently completed a magnificent edition of Purcell's sacred music. Soon after his death, a selection of his most popular songs, duets, &c. was published by his widow, with the aid of a large subscription, under the title of the *Orpheus Britannicus*. The first edition of this celebrated work, being hastily brought out, was very imperfect; but a second edition was published in 1702, which was more correct, and contained a better selection. In the same year, an additional volume was published, edited by Henry Playford.

Many copies of the *Orpheus Britannicus* are still extant, but they are very scarce and valuable. There is, however, a modern publication, in two volumes, intituled *The Beauties of Purcell*, which contains a great number of his finest productions His catches, rounds, &c. are to be found in every collection of that kind of music.

Purcell's sacred music is of the greatest merit; but England is so rich in noble compositions of this kind, by native artists, besides the transcendent works of Handel, that Purcell does not stand alone in sacred music, as he does in his vocal music for the theatre and the chamber. Here he remains, and probably will long remain, absolutely unrivalled by English musicians. He almost created this species of music in England, and at once raised it to a pitch of excellence which none of his successors have even approached.

In the charming music of the *Tempest*, how exquisitely has he accomplished the seemingly impossible task of realizing the description of the enchanted isle, as being

> ——————full of noises,
> Sounds and sweet airs, that give delight and hurt not!

The light and melodious "Come unto these yellow sands," and the solemn and unearthly song and chorus of invisible spirits, "Full fathom five," seem to be the very "sounds and sweet airs" that the poet himself must have imagined as proceeding from Prospero's aërial minstrels. Of a similar character is the music of the spirits in *King Arthur*. The extreme delicacy of the air sung by the fairy, Philidel, "Hither, this way," is finely contrasted with the roughness of the answer, "Let not a moon-born elf mislead you," by the malig-

nant spirit Grimbald. The duet in which the hero is tempted by the two "daughters of an aged stream," is truly enchanting; and his power of resisting such accents is felt to be one of the brightest triumphs of his virtue. The air, "Fairest isle, all isles excelling," is a melody worthy of Mozart in his happiest moments.

One of the finest specimens of Purcell's wonderful power of expression is the song, written for the character of Cardenio in *Don Quixote*, "Let the dreadful engines of eternal will." The transitions of the maniac, from the ravings of fury, to the ardour of love,—the tender recollection of his lost happiness, and finally, the bitterness of hatred,—are expressed with an energy and power to which we know no parallel in English music. The words,

> Then sung the nightingale and lark,
> Around us all was sweet and gay,
> *We ne'er grew sad till it grew dark,*
> And nothing feared but parting day;

are uttered with accents which it would require firm nerves to listen to with composure. This magnificent song used to be a favourite with some of the great singers of past days; but is now hardly ever attempted. Yet how finely would it display the highest powers of Braham!

A counterpart to this is the song "From rosy bowers," which is said to have been written during the last sickness of the composer. It was sung in the character of Altisidora, in the second part of *Don Quixote;* though the extreme sweetness and pathos of the music would rather indicate the author's intention to express the real feelings of a heart, broken and crazed from

slighted love, than the mere quizzing of the Duchess' witty damsel. This song, too, was a favourite of the great singers of a former age.

"Mad Bess," has been very rarely sung since the days of Madame Mara; but those who have heard her performance of that cantata, will never forget it. It used to be sung by every great female singer *before* her time,—by Mrs. Sheridan, Mrs. Bates, &c. The disuse of all these great and expressive compositions, the performance of which, besides voice and execution, requires intellectual power, and consummate musical knowledge, argues little in favour of the improvement of singing in our time; but they will be sung to enraptured audiences long after the fashionable favourites of the present day are lost in oblivion.

Purcell seems to have been fond of setting *mad songs* —probably from the scope they afforded for his great powers of expressing the strongest passions, in their most unrestrained form. There is another of this description, "I'll sail upon the Dog-star," which is full of fire and energy.

The duet in *Dioclesian*, "Tell me why, my charming fair," is graceful and elegant. Another duet, "When Myra sings," will be captivating as long as the language is understood. Were these duets, and other songs of this author now revived, they would have all the charm of novelty. "I attempt from Love's sickness to fly in vain," is a beautiful little ballad, which several of our present singers could render highly popular.* The air in the *Beggar's Opera*, "Virgins are like the fair flower,"

* This has been done by Mr. Hobbs.

which Miss Stephens used to sing with so much simple pathos, is by Purcell.

His cheerful temper and convivial habits prompted him to compose catches and glees, of which he produced a great number. He was led sometimes, in doing so, to make use of disgusting and licentious words, for the amusement of the coarse and dissolute company in which he appears to have mis-spent too many of his hours. But these have been long since thrown aside and forgotten; and we may, therefore, say of his compositions of this kind, in general, that they are exhilarating and delightful;—uniting humour and gaiety, with pleasing melody and ingenious contrivance.

Purcell's music, with all its beauties, has many faults: but the faults belong to the age and country in which he lived,—the beauties to his own genius. The growth of polished melody, in every country, has necessarily been slow; and has been assisted, not only by a succession of composers who have devoted themselves to its cultivation, and improved upon each other, but by the performance of skilful singers, who have always been found to lead the way to many refinements in melody. In England, when Purcell began to compose, the growth of melody had not been promoted by either of those means. There had not been a succession of composers like Stradella, Clarissimi, and Cesti, who had polished the melody of Italy; nor had the natives of that country begun to give us that course of lessons in singing which continues to this day, and of which we still feel the benefit. Purcell, therefore, had no assist-

ance but from the mere perusal of the music of those Italian composers, without being acquainted with their language, or knowing how their ideas were expressed by their own singers. There were no singers in England from whose performance of his songs he could derive notions of additional elegance and grace. Hence it is easy to perceive, notwithstanding the force of his genius, and the native goodness of his taste, that his melody, though full of originality and expression, must have often been rude and ungraceful. It is, accordingly, extremely unequal; and we are surprised to find elegance and coarseness, symmetry and clumsiness, mixed together in a way that would be unaccountable, did we not consider, that, in all the arts, the taste is a faculty which is slowly formed, even in the most highly-gifted minds.

The effect of his music is also impaired by the poverty of his instrumental symphonies and accompaniments. He did not know anything of the powers of the violin, or, indeed, of any other instrument which is necessary in an ochestra. It was not till after his death, that great instrumental performers, as well as singers, began to arrive from abroad; and if he had either had the advantage of travelling, or had enjoyed a longer life, even at home, the opportunities which he would have had of composing for such singers and performers, would have purified his vocal melody, and imparted force and richness to his instrumental music.

All the deficiences and faults of Purcell's music, therefore, may be ascribed to unfavourable circum-

stances, which no degree of genius could possibly have overcome. And yet so successfully did he contend with those circumstances, and so admirable are his works of every class, that his continues to be, to this hour, the greatest musical name of which his country can boast.

"Purcell's genius," says Burney, "though less cultivated and polished, was equal to that of the greatest masters on the Continent. And though his dramatic style and recitative were formed in a great measure on French models, there is a latent power and force in his expression of English words, whatever be the subject, that will make an unprejudiced native of this island feel, more than all the elegance, grace, and refinement of modern music, less happily applied, can do; and this pleasure is communicated to us, not by the symmetry or rhythm of modern melody, but by his having tuned to the true accents of our mother-tongue, those notes of passion, which an inhabitant of this island would breathe in such situations as the words describe. And these indigenous expressions of passion Purcell had the power to enforce by the energy of modulation, which, on some occasions, was bold, affecting, and sublime." "Handel," says the same author, "who flourished in a less barbarous age for his art, has been acknowledged Purcell's superior in many particulars; but in none more than the art and grandeur of his chorusses, the harmony and texture of his organ fugues, as well as his great style of playing that instrument; the majesty of his grand concertos; the ingenuity of his accompaniments to his songs and chorusses; and even in the

general melody of the airs themselves; yet in the accent, passion, and expression of *English words*, the vocal music of Purcell is, sometimes to my feelings, as superior to Handel's, as an original poem to a translation."

CHAPTER VII.

THE VIOLIN.—ITALIAN COMPOSERS FOR, AND PERFORMERS ON, THAT INSTRUMENT, TO THE END OF THE LAST CENTURY.—CORELLI.—GEMINIANI.—TARTINI.—VERACINI.—GIARDINI.—JARNOVICK.—VIOTTI.—BOCCHERINI.

THE modern *violin* is a modification of an instrument called the *viola*, or viol, which was invented during the middle ages, and continued in general use till the seventeenth century. It was mounted with six strings, and had a finger-board, like that of the modern guitar, with *frets* for directing the position of the fingers; but it was played with a bow. The viol was of three sizes; the treble-viol, the tenor-viol, and the bass-viol. The violin was formed from the treble-viol, by diminishing its size, reducing the number of its strings from six to four, and depriving the finger-board of frets, so as to allow the performer to regulate, by his ear, the position of his fingers. By a process precisely similar, the bass-viol, or *violone*, was converted into the *violoncello*.

The French and Italians dispute the invention of the violin. That it was, at least, in general use in France earlier than in Italy, appears from the circumstance, that, in Italian music of the latter part of the sixteenth century, the violins are called *piccoli violini alla Francese*. The first great violin-player on record, however, was Baltazarini, an Italian, who was brought into France by Catherine de Medicis, in 1577. The celebrated Corelli may be considered as the father of the violin; and his compositions for it are still highly

esteemed. He was the founder of a school, which produced a succession of great performers, during the whole of the last century, by whom the powers of the violin have been gradually brought to their present height. Of a few of the most distinguished of these individuals, we shall now give some account.

ARCANGELO CORELLI was born at Fusignano, in the territory of Bologna, in 1653. He is said, by Adami, to have received his first instructions in the rudiments of composition from Matteo Simonelli, of the Pope's chapel; and the general opinion is, that his master on the violin was Giambattista Bassani, of Bologna. Bassani was a learned and able musician, a successful composer, and an excellent performer on the violin. He composed a number of sonatas for that instrument, which are still to be met with; and upon which it is evident that Corelli formed his style. These pieces display a knowledge of the powers of the violin, not to be found in any other music anterior to that of Corelli.

After finishing his studies, Corelli went to Germany, in 1680, where he was treated in a manner worthy of his talents and rising reputation. After two years' residence in that country, he returned to Rome, and resumed his studies with great assiduity. In the year 1683, he published his first *Twelve Sonatas*, or trios, for two violins and a bass; and these were followed by a second series, consisting of the same number, in 1685. These, which consisted of movements adapted for dancing, were called *Balletti da Camera*.

In 1686, our James the Second sent an ambassador to Rome, with considerable pomp, for the purpose of

cultivating a good understanding with the Pope. This gave occasion to various festivities; and, among others, a great musical entertainment was given by the celebrated Christina, queen of Sweden, who, after her abdication, had fixed her residence in that city. On this occasion, an allegorical opera, written for the purpose of celebrating the accession of a Catholic prince to the throne of England, was performed. This drama was written by the celebrated poet Alessandro Guidi, and the music composed by Bernardo Pasquini. The drama is to be found in the edition of Guidi's poems, published at Verona, in 1726. It is of an allegorical nature, according to the taste of the time; and the characters are *London*, the *Thames*, *Fame*, and a good and rebel genius; with a chorus of a hundred singers. Corelli, as the greatest violinist of the time, was selected to lead the orchestra, which consisted of one hundred and fifty instrumental performers.

In 1690, he published the third series of his sonatas, or trios; and, in 1694, the last, which, like the second, he called *Balleti da Camera*.

About the year 1700, Corelli was leader of the opera band at Rome. At that time, the opera was in a flourishing state in that city, and gave employment to the talents of two other distinguished musicians,—Pasquini, the composer, and Gaetani, an excellent performer on the lute. Corelli, at this period, and during the rest of his life, enjoyed the favour of Cardinal Ottoboni, a liberal and enlightened patron of poetry and the fine arts. He conducted the musical entertainments given by the cardinal, in his palace, every Monday evening. Here he became acquainted with

Handel. One evening a serenata, composed by Handel, intituled "Il Trionfo del Tempo," (afterwards brought out in London, with English words, under the title of "The Triumph of Time and Truth,") was performed. Corelli, in leading the band, did not play the overture to the satisfaction of the composer, who, with his usual impetuosity, snatched the violin out of his hand. Corelli, with that gentleness which marked his character, merely said, "*Mio caro Sassone, questa musica è nello stile Francese, di che io non m'intendo.*" "My dear Saxon, this music is in the French style, which I don't understand." At that time, Lulli's style, in the composition of overtures, was fashionable, and followed even by Handel.

Corelli's *Solos for the Violin*, the best and most popular of all his works, were published at Rome, in 1700, and dedicated to Sophia Charlotta, electress of Brandenburg.

In consequence of the high reputation which Corelli had now acquired, numbers of young musicians resorted to Rome, even from distant countries, to receive his instructions. Lord Edgecumbe was among the most distinguished of his scholars; and it was under the auspices of this nobleman that Smith produced his fine mezzotinto print of Corelli, from the original portrait painted at Rome, by Henry Howard.

Besides his sonatas (or trios), and solos, Corelli composed a number of *Concertos* for the violin, which consisted of a part for a principal performer, with accompaniments for an orchestra.

The concluding part of Corelli's life was melancholy. Younger players began to surpass him in power of

execution; and the mortifications he suffered on that account preyed on his sensitive mind, and shortened his days. The following anecdotes were related by the celebrated Geminiani, one of Corelli's most illustrious scholars; and, as he heard and saw what he relates, there is, unhappily, no reason to doubt their accuracy.

At the time that Corelli enjoyed the highest reputation, his fame having reached the court of Naples, and excited a desire in the king to hear him perform, he was invited, by order of his majesty, to that capital. Corelli, with some reluctance, was at length prevailed on to accept the invitation: but lest he should not be well accompanied, he took with him his own second violin and violoncello. At Naples, he found Alessandro Scarlatti, and several other masters, who entreated him to play some of his concertos before the king. This he for some time declined, on account of his whole band not being with him; and there was no time, he said, for a rehearsal. At length, however, he consented; and in great fear performed the first of his concertos. His astonishment was very great, to find that the Neapolitan band executed his concertos almost as accurately at sight, as his own band, after repeated rehearsals, when they had almost got them by heart. "Si suona a Napoli!" (said he to his second violin;) "They *play* at Naples!"

After this, being again admitted into his majesty's presence, and desired to perform one of his sonatas, the king found one of the adagios so long and dry, that being tired, he quitted the room, to the great mortification of

Corelli. Afterwards he was desired to lead in the performance of a masque, composed by Scarlatti, which was to be executed before the king. This he undertook; but from Scarlatti's small knowledge of the violin, the part was somewhat awkward and difficult. In one place it went up to F; and when they came to that passage, Corelli was unable to execute it: but he was astonished beyond measure, to hear Petrillo, the Neapolitan leader, and other violins, perform that which had baffled his skill. A song succeeded this; and Corelli, flurried and disconcerted by his failure, mistook the key, and led it off in C *major*, instead of C *minor*. "*Ricominciamo*," said Scarlatti, good naturedly. Still Corelli persisted in the major key, till Scarlatti was obliged to call out to him, and set him right. So mortified was poor Corelli with this disgrace, and the general bad figure he imagined he had made at Naples, that he stole back to Rome in silence.

It was soon after this, that an oboe player, whose name Geminiani could not recollect, acquired such applause at Rome, that Corelli, disgusted, would never play again in public. All these mortifications, joined to the success of Valentini, whose concertos and performance, though infinitely inferior to those of Corelli, were become fashionable, threw him into a state of melancholy and chagrin, which was thought to have hastened his death.

"This account of Corelli's journey to Naples," as Burney well remarks, "is not a mere personal anecdote, as it throws light upon the comparative state of music at Naples and at Rome, in Corelli's time; and exhibits

a curious contrast between the fiery genius of the Neapolitans, and the meek, timid, and gentle character of Corelli, so analogous to the style of his music."

Corelli's concertos were not published till within six weeks of his death. They appeared in a very beautiful edition, at Amsterdam. The dedication, to John William, prince-palatine of the Rhine, is dated at Rome, the 3d of December, 1712; and Corelli died on the 18th of January following. He was buried in the Pantheon, where a monument was erected to his memory, by Philip William, count-palatine of the Rhine, under the superintendence of his steady friend and patron, Cardinal Ottoboni. He died in his sixtieth year.

For many years after the death of this great musician, its anniversary was commemorated by a solemn service in the Pantheon, in which pieces selected from his own works were performed by a numerous orchestra. Sir John Hawkins mentions, that in 1730 an eminent master of his acquaintance was present at the ceremony, who stated that the third and eighth concertos were performed by a band containing many persons who had beeen pupils of the composer. These compositions, he added, were played in a slow and distinct manner, without embellishments, and just as they are written; whence he concluded, that this was the style in which they had been executed by Corelli himself. This solemnity continued as long as his immediate scholars survived.

Corelli is said to have left about six thousand pounds sterling. Like many other musicians, he was a passionate lover of painting; and lived on terms of inti-

macy with some of the most eminent artists of the time, particularly Carlo Maratti. He left his fortune, including his collection of pictures, to Cardinal Ottoboni. But the cardinal, with a greater sense of propriety than that of Corelli himself on this occasion, distributed the property left to him among the testator's indigent relations, reserving to himself only the pictures. Corelli bequeathed his favourite violin, the case of which was painted with emblematical designs, by his friend Carlo Maratti, to the greatest of his disciples, Geminiani.

On Corelli's personal character all writers agree in bestowing the highest praise. His disposition was mild and gentle, and his life exemplary. He appears to have been modest and sensitive, even to a fault; a portion of that firmness and self-possession, which ought to be produced by a consciousness of talent, would have prevented the cloud which settled upon his latter days. The mildness of his temper, however, did not hinder him sometimes, when he felt it necessary, from vindicating the respect due to himself and his art. When he was performing a solo, on one occasion, at Cardinal Ottoboni's, he observed the cardinal and another person engaged in talking; on which he laid down his instrument, and, being asked the reason, replied, that "he feared his music interrupted the conversation."

He is said to have possessed a vein of good-humoured pleasantry; of which the following is an agreeable instance:—Adam Strunck, violinist to the elector of Hanover, arriving at Rome, immediately paid him a visit. Corelli, not knowing his person, but learning, in

the course of conversation, that he was a musician, asked what was his instrument? Strunck replied, that he played a little on the harpsichord and violin; and begged the favour that Corelli would let him hear his performance on the latter instrument. Corelli politely complied; and, on his laying down the violin, requested a specimen of Strunck's abilities. Strunck began to play, rather carelessly, but so well as to induce Corelli to pay him a compliment on the freedom of his bow, and to remark that, with practice, he would become an excellent player. Strunck then put the violin out of tune, and began to play with such skill, correcting, with his fingers, the mistuning of the instrument, that Corelli, in amazement at his dexterity, exclaimed: "I am called *Arcangelo;* but, by heaven, sir, you must be *Archidiavolo!*"

The character of the violin, as a solo instrument, has been so much changed, and its powers so wonderfully developed, of late years, that Corelli's compositions are almost entirely laid aside by public performers. Salomon and Barthelomon are, we believe, the last great masters who have studied and performed them. Now-a-days, we sometimes hear one of Corelli's trios performed on two violoncellos and a double bass; and the famous ninth solo serves to exhibit the powers of Lindley and Dragonetti on their respective instruments.

Corelli's concertos are still performed now and then at the Concert of Ancient Music. Though they are no longer calculated to show off the bow and fingers of the principal violin-players, yet their effect, as sym-

phonies, for a numerous orchestra, is excellent, and never fails to delight the audience. Their melody is flowing and simple, and of a kind which is independent of the changes of fashion; the harmony is pure and rich, and the disposition of the parts judicious and skilful. The eighth of these concertos, composed for the purpose of being performed on Christmas-eve, has probably had more celebrity than any piece of music that ever was written. It is exquisitely beautiful, and seems destined to bid defiance to the attacks of time. The whole is full of profound religious feeling; and the pastoral sweetness of the movement descriptive of the "shepherds abiding in the fields," has never been surpassed—not even by Handel's movement of the same kind in the Messiah. If ever this divine music is thrown aside and forgotten, it will be the most unequivocal sign of the corruption of taste and the decay of music in England.

The four sets of *sonatas* or *trios* were Corelli's earliest works; and differ much in quality, as well as character. It has been remarked that their excellence is progressive; the third and fourth series being superior, in invention and ingenuity, to the first and second. The third series, in particular, which are composed in the grave and solemn style which belongs to the church, are remarkable for their admirable fugues, which are frequently on noble subjects, and treated with consummate skill. The second and fourth set, which consist chiefly of movements calculated for dancing, are full of gay and graceful melodies, the accompaniments to which are light and delicate. So pleasing

and popular are these movements, that they were used, for a great many years, as the music between the acts, in the London theatres.

The most generally popular among Corelli's works, and that which is still in most frequent use, is his *Solos*. These, to this day, are considered among the best compositions that can be put into the hands of a young performer on the violin, for the purpose of forming both his hand and his taste. They contain, indeed, none of the difficulties of the present day; and will not afford the student the means of producing some of the most beautiful effects which are peculiar to the modern school; such as *singing*, as it may be called, whole passages, upon one string. But they are admirably adapted for the formation of a full, smooth, and clear tone, a firm and distinct manner of playing, and an intonation delicately correct; qualities which form the essentials of good performance, and which, when once gained, render the acquisition of the modern style comparatively easy. Independently, too, of their value as studies for the instrument, they are full of beauties. The ninth, taken as a whole, is, perhaps, the most perfect: its noble introduction, the elegant *gigha* which follows, and the spirited concluding movement, render it, in the hands of two skilful performers, one of the most agreeable duets, (for the importance of the violoncello part renders it a duet,) that can be imagined. In his jigs,—and the name of jig, in the Italian music of those days, did not convey the trifling and vulgar idea attached to the modern word,—Corelli is peculiarly happy; that in the fifth solo has never been rivalled,

and the subject of it, on account of its pre-eminent beauty, is said to be engraved on his tomb.

Dr. Burney, we think, in his estimate of Corelli's character as a musician, hardly does him justice. His praise is somewhat too cold and faint. He quotes, with approbation, the following character, which Geminiani gave of his master. "His merit was not depth of learning, like that of Alessandro Scarlatti; nor great fancy, nor rich invention in melody or harmony; but a nice and most delicate taste, which led him to select the most pleasing harmonies and melodies, and to construct the parts so as to produce the most delightful effect upon the ear." At the time of Corelli's greatest reputation, Geminiani asked Scarlatti what he thought of him; he answered, that "He found nothing greatly to admire in his composition, but was extremely struck with the manner in which he played his concertos, and his nice management of his band, the uncommon accuracy of whose performance gave his concertos an amazing effect, even to the eye as well as the ear. For, continued Geminiani, "Corelli regarded it essential to the *ensemble* of a band, that their bows should all move exactly together, all up or all down; so that, at his rehearsals, which constantly preceded every public performance of his concertos, he would immediately stop the band if he discovered one irregular bow." It has been well remarked*, that "This opinion shows Scarlatti to have been a prejudiced judge, a trifling critic." None but such a critic could have found nothing in Corelli's music or performance, worth notice,

* Memoir of Corelli, *Harmonicon* for May, 1824.

except his making his band draw their bows in one way. As to Geminiani's opinion, some feeling of jealousy must have warped the judgment of one so well qualified to form a sound one. He hardly allows Corelli to possess fancy or invention; but ascribes the delightful effect of his music to a nice ear and delicate taste, which led him to *select* the most pleasing melodies and harmonies. From whence did he select them? From the stores of melody and harmony contained in the contemporary composers? To some extent he certainly did so; but no more than other great, and most original composers;—not more than Purcell from Carissimi, Haydn from Emanuel Bach, or Mozart from Gluck and the Italian dramatic composers. Corelli, undoubtedly, had the violin compositions of Bassani, and others, before him; but, like all other great masters, he formed a style for himself, which so far surpassed that of all his predecessors, that his music at once consigned theirs to oblivion. His merit, Geminiani says, was not in depth of learning; or, in other words, he was defective in that respect. His compositions are certainly less filled with chromatic intervals and singular modulations than those of Scarlatti; but it did not, on that account, require either less skill, or less learning, to produce them. Scarlatti's own merit does not lie in that sort of learning. If it did, it would not be great; for the beauty of his compositions is injured, in place of being heightened by it. Nobody will accuse Jomelli or Cimarosa of want of learning; yet there is more learning of this description, in one crude essay of a juvenile German composer, than in all their operas put together. It is always observed that

increased learning and experience are attended with increased purity and simplicity of style.

The best proof of the force and originality of Corelli's genius is, that the appearance of his works forms one of the most remarkable eras in music. All other compositions for the violin, produced either before or during his time, are either totally forgotten, or remembered merely as matters of history; while his simple and natural strains still live, and still are heard with delight.

Corelli formed a school which produced a number of distinguished composers for the violin, and performers on that instrument, during the first part of the last century. Among these, Geminiani requires the first notice, as being the most eminent of Corelli's immediate disciples.

FRANCESCO GEMINIANI was born at Lucca, according to Dr. Burney, in 1666; but according to Sir John Hawkins, in 1680. The latter date seems the more probable; particularly as, if Burney's were correct, Geminiani would have attained the age of ninety-six. He received his first instructions on the violin from Carlo Ambrosio Lunati, a celebrated performer; and afterwards studied composition, under Scarlatti, and received instructions from Corelli, at Rome. He came to England in 1714, and soon acquired considerable celebrity, from his admirable performance. In 1716 he published twelve solos for the violin; a work which had very great success. Some years afterwards he converted Corelli's first six solos into concertos, which were so favourably received as to induce him to treat the remaining six solos in the same manner. But

these, not being written in the same full and elaborate manner as the first six, did not bear to be expanded into compositions for an orchestra, and accordingly were coldly received. He also arranged as concertos six of Corelli's trios. It was not till the year 1731 that he published his second original work, consisting of six concertos; and this was soon followed by another set of the same number. He afterwards published another set of twelve solos; and, lastly, a set of six concertos. These are all his original works for the instrument of which he was so great a master.

The remainder of his publications consisted of his former works thrown into new forms, such as conversions of his solos into trios, or concertos; of some elementary works on composition, and on the violin; and a piece of dramatic instrumental music, which he called *The Enchanted Forest*. All his works were published in England, where indeed, he himself resided for the greatest part of his long life.

Geminiani seldom performed in public during his residence in England. His income was derived from the profits of his publications, his scholars, and the presents which he received from the great and wealthy, when they could persuade him to play at their houses. Though his habits were not vicious or dissipated, yet he was imprudent and expensive; and consequently often involved in distress. He was passionately fond of painting, a propensity which has been often remarked in musicians. For the sake of its gratification, he was apt to neglect his musical studies and pursuits, and to involve himself in expenses which his means could not

bear. Burney insinuates, that his picture-dealing arose from sordid motives, instead of a love for the art; a charge which seems too lightly made. He says, that it is to be feared, that a propensity towards chicane and cunning determined Geminiani to try his hand at buying cheap, and selling dear, and playing off the other tricks of a picture-dealer. The truth rather seems to be, that he became a buyer and seller of pictures in the same way as many other *dilettanti*, who have not fortune enough to afford so expensive a pleasure,—bought expensive pictures because he took a fancy to them, and sold them, at a great loss, when necessity compelled him to part with them. In the distress which he thus brought upon himself, he was obliged, for the security of his person, to avail himself of the protection from arrest which the English nobility at that time had the privilege of extending to their servants. For this purpose, the earl of Essex was prevailed upon to enrol his name in the list of his domestics.

One circumstance which occurred while his distresses were urgent, shows that he was very far from having a sordid mind. The place of master of the state music in Ireland having become vacant, the earl of Essex obtained a promise of it from Sir R. Walpole, and then told Geminiani that his troubles were at an end, as he was now sure of a comfortable provision for life. This was joyful news for poor Geminiani; but when he found that the office was not tenable by a Roman Catholic, he at once declined it; saying, that, however humble his pretensions might be to a religious character, yet he never would renounce the communion in

which he had been baptized and brought up, for any considerations of temporal benefit.

Geminiani appears, during his whole life, to have struggled with pecuniary difficulties. In his latter days he raised a considerable sum by an expedient then new in England; that of giving a *Concerto Spirituale*, or oratorio, in the Lent season of 1748. In 1761 he went to Ireland, to visit his scholar Dubourg, who had obtained the situation which his religious principles had made him decline. He had spent many years in preparing an elaborate work on music, which he intended for publication; but soon after his arrival in Dublin, the manuscript was stolen from his chamber, by the treachery of a female servant, (who, it is said, was employed to do so,) and it could never be recovered. This heavy and irreparable loss so deeply affected his mind, that it hastened his death, which happened on the 17th of September, 1762, in his eighty-third year.

Considering Geminiani's great talents as a composer, it is surprising that he should have produced so little; and still more so, that he should have employed himself in such mechanical labour, as that of dressing up the compositions of Corelli, and former works of his own, in new shapes. From this it may be inferred, notwithstanding the excellence of his music, that his invention was not fertile, and that he felt the production of original ideas to be painful and laborious. His music, however, is original, and full of new and bold modulations and combinations of harmony; while his melodies are not only very elegant, but often extremely pathetic. His performance appears, from every account

of it, to have been remarkable for its delicacy, grace, and expression.

GIUSEPPE TARTINI was born at Pirano, a seaport in the province of Istria, in April, 1692. He was intended for the law; but was diverted from the studies necessary for that profession, by his propensity to music. In 1710, he was sent to the university of Padua, to pursue his studies in jurisprudence; but, having become acquainted with a young lady, the niece of the bishop of Padua, he undertook to give her some musical instructions; and this fascinating intercourse produced such an attachment between the youthful master and scholar, that a marriage was the consequence, before the lover was twenty. For this act of imprudence, he was discarded by his parents, forced to leave his wife, and to wander over the country in search of an asylum, while she remained at Padua. The lady's uncle was so incensed, that Tartini was obliged to make his escape in the disguise of a pilgrim. After many hardships, he at last found refuge in a convent, at Assisi, the prior of which was his relation. Here he remained for nearly two years; and diverted his melancholy by practising on the violin, while, at the same time, he received instructions from the organist of the monastry, who was an able musician. Meanwhile, the bishop of Padua, unable to bear the sight of his niece, pining away in hopeless misery, at last relented, and promised to forgive her husband, if he could be found. Of this happy change Tartini knew nothing; but happening one day, on the occasion of a great festival, to play on the violin in the choir of the church, a sudden gust of wind blew aside the curtain

of the orchestra, and discovered him among the musicians. He was recognised by one of the inhabitants of Padua, and had immediately the happiness to learn that the bishop, whom he believed to be still his inveterate enemy, had been subdued by the tears and anguish of his young bride, and had long been seeking him, that he might restore him to her arms.

Tartini returned to Padua; and, soon afterwards, an Academy of Music being founded at Venice, he was chosen a member of it, and went thither with his wife. But, happening to hear the celebrated Veracini, who was then at Venice, he was so astonished and disheartened by the superiority of that performer, that he would not venture on a competition with him, and therefore gave up his appointment, and left Venice. He retired to Ancona, and devoted himself so ardently to his studies, that he soon became the greatest master of the age.

While residing at Ancona, he discovered the remarkable acoustical phenomenon of the *third sound*. If two sounds, consisting, of any of the consonant intervals, are produced upon two musical instruments, the performers standing at some distance from each other, a person stationed between them will hear a third sound, which is generated in the air, and forms a bass to the other two. From this beautiful phenomenon, Tartini formed a theory, or system, of harmony, which, for a long time, divided the attention of the musical world with the celebrated system of Rameau. The respective merits of these systems where keenly discussed by the literati of France; and Rousseau, in his *Musical Dictionary*, (article Système,) gave a long

explanation of that of Tartini, which only showed the confusion of his own ideas on the subject. Tartini's system never got into such general vogue as that of Rameau; but they stand now on an equal footing; the musical world being convinced that neither the one nor the other is of any value whatever.

In 1721, Tartini was appointed conductor of the orchestra of the church of San Antonio, in Padua, then one of the greatest musical establishments of this sort in Italy. By this time, his reputation was so great, that he received repeated invitations to visit Paris and London. These he declined; but, in 1723, he was induced to attend the coronation of the emperor Charles the Sixth, at Prague; and was so much gratified by his reception, that he resided there for three years. He then returned to Padua; and, after that period, no offers of foreign engagements, however advantageous, could tempt him to leave his quiet and happy home. Burney, whose account of Tartini, in his *Italian Tour*, contains several inaccuracies, ascribes his refusal of all engagements to his devotion to St. Anthony of Padua, his patron saint, to whose service he had consecrated himself and his violin, so early as 1722. But this silly story is inconsistent with his afterwards spending three years in Germany.

Tartini died in February, 1770, at Padua, where he had resided for fifty years, beloved and esteemed by his fellow-citizens. He was gentle and benevolent; distinguished for piety and unaffected humility; and possessed of considerable scientific attainments. His compositions are very numerous, consisting of above a hundred sonatas, and as many concertos. Among them

is the famous *Sonata del Diavolo;* of the origin of which, Tartini gave the following account to the astronomer Lalande:—

"One night, in the year 1713, I dreamed that I had made a compact with his satanic majesty, by which he was received into my service. Everything succeeded to the utmost of my desires, and my every wish was anticipated by this my new domestic. I thought that on taking up my violin to practise, I jocosely asked him if he could play on this instrument. He answered that he believed he was able to pick out a tune; when, to my astonishment, he began a sonata so strange, and yet so beautiful, and executed in so masterly a manner, that, in the whole course of my life, I had never heard anything so exquisite. So great was my amazement, that I could scarcely breathe. Awakened by the violent sensation, I instantly seized my violin, in the hope of being able to catch some part of the ravishing melody which I had just heard; but all in vain. The piece which I composed, according to my scattered recollections, is, it is true, the best I ever produced. I have entitled it 'Sonata del Diavolo;' but it is so far inferior to that which had made so forcible an impression on me, that I should have dashed my violin into a thousand pieces, and given up music for ever in despair, had it been possible to deprive myself of the enjoyments which I receive from it."

Time, and the still more surprising flights of more modern performers, have deprived this celebrated sonata of anything *diabolical* which it may once have appeared to possess; but it has great fire and originality, and contains difficulties of no trifling magnitude, even at the

present day. That process of mind by which we sometimes hear, in sleep, a beautiful piece of music, an eloquent discourse, or a fine poem, is one of those mysterious things which show how wonderfully we are made. It would appear, that there are times when the soul, in that partial disunion between it and the body which takes place during sleep, and while it sees, hears, and acts, without the intervention of the bodily organs, exerts powers of which, at other times, its material trammels render it incapable.

Tartini's compositions, with all the correctness and polish of Corelli's, are bolder and more impassioned. His slow movements, in particular, are remarkably vocal and expressive; and his music shows a knowledge of the violin, both in regard to the bow and the finger-board, which Corelli had not been able to attain. His works, therefore, though no longer heard in public, are still prized by the best musicians; and some of them have been recently reprinted for the use of the *Conservatoire*, at Paris. He has frequently injured their effect, to modern ears, by the introduction of trills and ornaments, which have become old-fashioned; but, at the same time, they are full of beauties, which, belonging to the musical language of nature and feeling, are independent of the influence of time.

Contemporary with Tartini was FRANCESCO MARIA VERACINI, who rivalled him both in regard to performance and composition. As a performer, he had much fire and boldness,—great power in the management of the bow, and a remarkably clear and loud tone. His solos are still well known to musicians, and possess much merit; but they are less esteemed than those of

Tartini. Veracini was in England about the middle of last century; when he not only excited great admiration by his performances, but produced several successful operas. Of his life little more is known than a few anecdotes, indicative of the arrogance and vanity of his disposition.

Felice Giardini was born at Turin, in 1716. He received instructions on the violin from Lorenzo Somis, a distinguished scholar of Corelli. At the age of seventeen, he obtained a situation in the opera orchestra of Naples, and was soon stationed next to the first violin. In this situation he was fond of displaying his execution, and used to flourish and use too many freedoms with the music before him. One evening, however, during the performance of an opera of Jomelli, the celebrated composer himself came into the orchestra, and seated himself by Giardini; who, determined to give the great *maestro* a touch of his quality, proceeded, in the symphony of a song, to indulge his fingers and fancy at such a rate, that he was rewarded by Jomelli, for the brilliancy of his execution, with a hearty slap on the face,—"The best lesson," said Giardini, who himself told the story, "that I ever received in my life." He submitted to the correction, however, with so good a grace, that he gained the good opinion of Jomelli, who afterwards rendered him many important services.

After gaining a splendid reputation on the Continent, Giardini came to England in 1750. His performances were heard with astonishment and delight; and, after having been employed at all the concerts in the metropolis, he was placed at the head of the Opera orchestra. This led him to take a share in the management of

that enormous, and often ruinous, establishment, along with the celebrated female singer, Signora Mingotti: the consequence was, that they were both very speedily brought to the verge of bankruptcy, and were glad, at the end of the first season, to get rid of the concern as they best could. Notwithstanding this lesson, they were foolish enough to embark again in the Opera management a few years afterwards; and again, after one calamitous season, were obliged to give it up. His female associate, who by this time had declined in public favour, left England, and he, after seeing all his property swallowed up in the Opera-house, except the privilege of an annual benefit, was under the necessity of returning to his proper employment of composition, leading, and performing at concerts, and teaching singing in families of rank.

The account given by Burney of the musical feuds in which Mingotti and Giardini were engaged with rival performers, and the interest taken in them by the fashionable world, presents a curious feature in the manners of high life in those days. When Giardini arrived in London, he gained many friends among the nobility and gentry; among the warmest of whom was Mrs. Fox Lane, afterwards Lady Bingley, a supreme leader of the *ton* at that period. When Mingotti afterwards arrived, and joined with Giardini in the management of the Opera, Mrs. Fox Lane espoused her cause with great zeal, and entered into her quarrels with all the vehemence of a partisan. It is told of this lady, that, having desired the Honourable General Crewe to give her his decided opinion as to the merits of a dispute between Mingotti and another siren, whose rivalry then

shook the fashionable world, the general, after listening, with much gravity, to a long list of grievances of which her favourite complained, said, "And pray, madam, who is Signora Mingotti?" "Get out of my house," exclaimed the lady, in a rage, "you shall never hear her sing another note here as long as you live!"

Mrs. Fox Lane, with two such performers as Mingotti and Giardini, used to give concerts to her choice friends, which were subjects of envy and obloquy to all who were unable to obtain admission to them. At these concerts, besides these two professors, several of the most distinguished fashionables used to perform; "And the difficulty," says Burney, "or rather the impossibility, of hearing these professors and illustrious *dilettanti* anywhere else, stimulated curiosity so much, that there was no sacrifice or mortification to which fashionable people would not submit in order to obtain admission. And *la padrona della casa* lost but few opportunities of letting them know the value she set on her invitations, by using them like dogs when they were there. Whenever a benefit was in contemplation for one of her *protégés*, taking care of the honour of her guests, she obliged them to behave with due gratitude and munificence on the occasion. 'Come,' she would say to her friends, 'give me five guineas!'—a demand as implicitly obeyed as if made on the road. Nor had any one, who ever wished to be admitted into such good company again, the courage to ask the occasion of the demand; but patiently waited the lady's pleasure to tell them whether they should be honoured with a ticket for Giardini's or Mingotti's benefit."

Giardini continued to enjoy the favour of the English

public till 1784, when he went to Italy. When he returned to London, after an absence of five years, he was no longer received as formerly. His health was impaired, and his powers diminished; and the public attention was now occupied with newer favourites. After an unsuccessful attempt to carry on a burletta, or comic opera, in the Haymarket Theatre, he carried his company of performers to Russia, in 1793. But he was as unsuccessful there as in England; and, after struggling for some years with his difficulties, he died at St. Petersburgh in 1796, at the age of eighty, in great poverty. The advantages which he gained by his talents, he lost during his whole life, by his disposition. By his extravagance he squandered the large sums he received, and alienated his best friends by his capricious and splenetic temper.

As a composer, Giardini had small pretensions to learning. When somebody told Dr. Boyce that he professed to teach composition in twenty lessons, the doctor sarcastically replied, "All that *he* knows of composition he might teach in *ten*." His music, however, was pleasing and effective, and long very popular. He did not confine himself to instrumental composition, but wrote two or three operas, which had considerable success, and a number of songs, some of which were in request in private musical societies within our recollection.

GIOVANNI JARNOVICK (or GIORNOVICHI) was born at Palermo in 1745. He was a favourite pupil of the celebrated French performer, Lolli; and first appeared in public in Paris. For a number of years he enjoyed the highest reputation in France, Germany, and England,

as a performer on the violin. Between the years 1792 and 1796 his performances attracted crowds, not only in London, but in all parts of Britain and Ireland. His star, however, faded under the superior brilliancy of that of Viotti; and a dispute with an eminent professor, in which public opinion was strongly against him, so injured his popularity, that he left this country. He died of apoplexy at St. Petersburgh, in 1804.

Jarnovick was a man of very eccentric character; and some amusing anecdotes are related of him. At Lyons he, on one occasion, announced a concert at six francs a ticket. No audience appearing, he resolved to be revenged on the stinginess of the Lyonese, and postponed the performance to the following evening, reducing the price of admission to three francs. A crowded audience assembled; but while they were in vain waiting for the performer, he was many miles off. He often quarrelled with the famous Chevalier de St. George, who was the first swordsman of his day, and a good violinist. One day, in the heat of a dispute, Jarnovick gave his formidable opponent a box on the ear: but St. George, with admirable moderation, coolly turned round to a person who was present, and said "*J'aime trop son talent pour me battre avec lui!*" "I am too fond of his talents to fight him."

Jarnovick was but a slender musician. His concertos are agreeable and brilliant, but destitute of profundity and grandeur. His performance was graceful and elegant, and his tone was pure. He was remarkably happy in the way in which he treated simple and popular lively airs as rondos—returning, over and anon, to his theme, after a variety of brilliant excursions, in a

manner that used to fascinate his hearers. But, both in his composition and performance, he wanted those higher qualities which distinguished the admirable Viotti.

Giovanni Battista Viotti was a native of Piedmont, and was born in 1755. He was a pupil of Pugnani, a distinguished performer of that period; and at the age of twenty was appointed first violinist to the Royal Chapel of Turin. He went to Paris about the year 1778, and had no sooner appeared in public than he was hailed as the first master of the age. Jarnovick, at that time was in the height of his fame; but he was unable to contend with his young rival, who excited universal admiration, both by the grand and expressive style of his compositions, and by his masterly performance. An anecdote is told of him at this time, as a trait of the independence of spirit which belongs to genius, but which rather indicates the impetuosity of a hot-headed youth. His fame having attracted the attention of the queen, he was invited to perform at a concert at Versailles. The town was crowded with persons of distinction belonging to the court; and Viotti had begun a solo, which was listened to with breathless attention, when a cry was heard in the room, of "Place à Monseigneur le Comte d'Artois," and some bustle took place in making way for his royal highness. Viotti, indignant at the interruption, placed his violin under his arm, and walked out of the room, to the great amazement and displeasure of the spectators. We confess we see but little to admire in this, and similar traits of petulance, which it is common to relate as being to the credit of men of genius. It is added, that he

took the resolution never again to perform in public in France, and adhered to it.

In 1790, Viotti was driven from Paris by the storms of the Revolution. He came to London, where he appeared at the memorable concerts carried on by Salomon, and where his reception was as enthusiastic as it had been in France. In 1794 and 1795 he had some concern in the management of the Opera-house, and soon after became leader of the orchestra of that theatre. He was in this situation when, one evening, while enjoying himself in the society of his friends, he suddenly received an order from government to leave England immediately. This measure must, of course, have proceeded from some of the political suspicions so readily entertained in those troublesome times; though there was nothing in Viotti's quiet and blameless life that could have given ground for them. It has been surmised, (and indeed there seems no other way of accounting for it,) that the public functionaries proceeded on calumnious information, dictated by professional jealousy. Viotti was a man of such a delicate and sensitive mind, that this occurrence gave a shock to his feelings from which it was long before they recovered.

Being thus driven from England, Viotti took up his residence in a retired spot in the neighbourhood of Hamburgh, where he produced some of his finest compositions. Among these are his celebrated *Six Duets Concertante*, for two violins; in the preface to which work, he alludes to the circumstance which still affected his mind:—"Cet ouvrage est le fruit du loisir que le malheur me procure: quelques morceaux ont été dictés par la peine, d'autres par l'espoir." And, in truth, we know

of no musical work which seems to have proceeded more directly from a feeling heart than these exquisite duets.

In 1801, Viotti found no further obstacle to his return to London. Having determined to abandon the musical profession, he embarked his capital in the wine-trade. After many years, the undertaking proved unfortunate, and he was obliged to give it up, with the loss of his whole fortune. In this situation he solicited some appointment from the French court; and Louis the Eighteenth conferred on him the management of the Grand Opera. But his age, and his long life of retirement, disqualified him for a situation so full of bustle and intrigue; and his management was an unsuccessful one. He obtained permission to retire on a pension; and returned to London, to the society and habits of which he had become, as it were, naturalized. But his health was irreparably injured by his cares and misfortunes; and, after declining for some time, he died on the 3rd of March, 1824.

Viotti's character appears, from the concurring testimony of all who knew him to have been of an exalted kind. We have already mentioned the delicacy and sensibility of his mind; and the purity of his life preserved to him that strong feeling of the most simple and innocent enjoyments, which is seldom found to survive a continued intercourse with the world. One* who knew him well, thus describes this part of his character very beautifully:—"Never did a man attach so much value to the simplest gift of nature; and never did a child enjoy them more passionately. A simple violet,

* M. Eymar.

discovered buried in the grass, would transport him with the liveliest joy; a pear, a plumb, gathered fresh by his own hands, would, for the moment, make him the happiest of mortals; the perfume of the one had always something new to him, and the taste of the other something more delicious than before. His organs, all delicacy and sensibility, seemed to have preserved, undiminished, their youthful purity. In the country, everything was, to this extraordinary man, an object of fresh interest and enjoyment. The slightest impression seemed communicated to all his senses at once; everything affected his imagination; everything spoke to his heart, and he yielded himself at once to its emotions."

He himself illustrates this part of his character, in the description which he gives of his picking up one of the varieties of the *Ranz des Vaches* among the mountains of Switzerland.

"The *Ranz des Vaches* which I send you," says he to a friend, "is neither that with which our friend Jean Jacques has presented us,* nor that of which M. de la Borde speaks in his work upon music. I cannot say whether it is known or not; all I know is, that I heard it in Switzerland, and once heard, I have never forgotten it since.

"I was sauntering alone, towards the decline of day, in one of those sequestered spots where we never feel a desire to open our lips. The weather was mild and serene; the wind, which I detest, was hushed; all was calm,—all was in unison with my feelings, and tended to lull me into that melancholy mood, which, ever since I

* Rousseau, in his *Dictionnaire de Musique*.

can remember, I have been accustomed to feel at the hour of twilight.

"My thoughts wandered at random, and my footsteps were equally undirected. My imagination was not occupied with any particular object, and my heart lay open to every impression of pensive delight.

"I walked forward; I descended the valleys, and traversed the heights. At length, chance conducted me to a valley, which, on rousing myself from my waking dream, I discovered to abound with beauties. It reminded me of one of those delicious retreats so beautifully described by Gessner: flowers, verdure, steamlets, all united to form a picture of perfect harmony.

"There, without being fatigued, I seated myself mechanically on a fragment of rock, and again fell into that kind of profound reverie which so totally absorbed all my faculties, that I forgot whether I was upon earth.

"While thus sitting, wrapped in this slumber of the soul, sounds broke upon my ear, which were sometimes of a hurried, sometimes of a prolonged and sustained character, and were repeated, in softened tones, by the echoes around. I found they proceeded from a mountain-horn; and their effect was heightened by a plaintive female voice. Struck as if by enchantment, I started from my lethargy, listened with breathless attention, and learned, or rather engraved upon my memory, the *Ranz des Vaches* which I send you*. But

* This, with several other varieties of the National Air of Switzerland, may be found in *The Harmonicon*, for March and April, 1824. The latter number contains a memoir of Viotti, to which we are indebted for the particulars of his life.

in order to understand all its beauties, you ought to be transplanted to the scene in which I heard it, and to feel all the enthusiasm that such a moment inspired."

This extreme sensibility and simplicity of character acquired an additional charm from their union, not only with great genius, but with a strong and highly-cultivated intellect. Viotti passed his life in the society of the accomplished, the literary, and the scientific; and his mind thus acquired both refinement and strength. In his intercourse with the great, he never, for a moment, forgot the dignity of his own character, or of their rank. All his transactions were regulated by the strictest integrity and honour; and his feelings were kind and benevolent.

As a musician, it may be truly said, that though the *virtuosi* of the present day execute difficulties which were not attempted in his time, yet, in all the highest qualities that belong to performance, he has never been surpassed. His compositions for the violin remain, to this day, unrivalled in grandeur and nobleness of design, graceful melody, and variety of expression. They still furnish, when performed by the surviving disciples of his school, one of the most delightful treats which a lover of the great and beautiful in music can receive.

The last whom we shall mention of the great musicians of this class, is BOCCHERINI. This composer went, in early life, to Spain, where he continued till his death. During a period of fifty years, he produced a number of compositions of great merit. His remote situation, and seclusion from intercourse with the musical world, prevented him from accompanying the

march of improvement in which Haydn and Mozart were the leaders. His music, therefore, continued always to be written in the style that was fashionable in his early days. Like youth and beauty in old-fashioned habiliments, it looks, at first, older than it really is; but its bloom and freshness are soon discernible through its antiquated attire. Boccherini was compelled to draw entirely upon his own resources; and hence arise the originality of his style, and the air of nature and simplicity which distinguishes his compositions. His *Quintets* are the finest of his works. Viotti, when enjoying a musical evening among his friends, used to play them in preference to all other music. They have less fire and variety, however, than the German works of the same species; and, notwithstanding their simplicity, it is much more difficult to execute them with sufficient smoothness and delicacy; for which reasons they are now less frequently heard than they deserve to be.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ITALIAN OPERA IN ENGLAND PREVIOUS TO THE ARRIVAL OF HANDEL.—LIFE OF HANDEL.

BEFORE the end of the seventeenth century there was a growing taste for Italian music in our metropolis. In 1692, the celebrated Margherita de l'Epine was performing at concerts, and was designated, in the advertisements, as "the Italian woman that is lately come over, that is so celebrated for her singing." This lady, who was the first Italian singer, at least of any note, who appeared in England, came over with a German musician of the name of Greber; and hence she is familiarly named, in the lampoons of the day, "Greber's Peg." She continued to enjoy the favour of the public without intermission till her marriage with the celebrated Dr. Pepusch in 1718. Her musical abilities must have been very considerable to have enabled her to preserve so large a share of favour, at a time when the rage for *foreign* novelties had not begun, and in spite of her appearance, which was so far from being attractive, that her husband used to call her Hecate, a name to which she answered with perfect good-humour. She was a great performer on the harpsichord. She had a sister who came to England in 1703, and we find them both mentioned by Swift, in his Journal to Stella, in the following respectful terms:—"August 6th, 1711. We have a music-

meeting in our town (Windsor) to-night. I went to the rehearsal of it, and there was *Margarita*, and her sister, and another drab, and a parcel of fiddlers. I was weary, and would not go to the meeting, which I am sorry for, because I heard it was a great assembly." Margherita had a rival in Mrs. Tofts, who was a principal performer in the earliest English operas.

The first opera upon the Italian model, though not in the Italian language, appeared in 1705. It was an English version of *Arsinoe, Queen of Cyprus*, an opera that had been successfully performed in Italy. The music was composed by Clayton; and the singers were all English. It was a wretched production; the poverty of the translation being only equalled by the absurd manner in which it was set to music. But Clayton, though an ignorant pretender, contrived to make himself pass for a great reformer of English music; and his opera was very successful. His pretentions imposed on no less a personage than Addison, who determined to write an opera in the Italian style, for the composer and performers of *Arsinoe*, and his well-known *Rosamond* was the fruit of this determination. It appeared on the 4th of March, 1707; but, notwithstanding the merit of the poetry, and the general partiality for English music and English singing, it supported only three representations, and was never again performed with Clayton's music.

About this time the celebrated Nicolino Grimaldi, generally known by the name of Nicolini, arrived in England. Nicolini, from the accounts both of musicians, and of the literati of that day, must have been one of the greatest actors, as well as singers, that has

appeared on the stage. His debût was in an opera called *Pyrrhus and Demetrius*, originally composed by Alessandro Scarlatti, and adapted to the English stage by Haym, a musician of merit. Steele, in the *Tatler*, after speaking of this opera as a noble entertainment, gives the following very striking description of Nicolini: —"For my own part, I was fully satisfied with the sight of an actor, who, by the grace and propriety of his action and gesture, does honour to the human figure. Every one will imagine I mean Signor Nicolini, who sets off the character he bears in an opera by his action, as much as he does the words of it by his voice. Every limb, and every finger contributes to the part he acts, insomuch that a deaf man may go along with him in the sense of it. There is scarce a beautiful posture in an old statue which he does not plant himself in, as the different circumstances of the story give occasion for it. He performs the most ordinary action in a manner suitable to the greatness of his character, and shows the prince even in the giving of a letter, or despatching of a messenger. Our best actors," he continues, "are somewhat at a loss to support themselves with proper gesture as they move from a considerable distance to the front of the stage; but I have seen the person of whom I am now speaking enter alone the remotest part of it, and advance with such greatness of air and mien, as seemed to fill the stage, and at the same time commanded the attention of the audience with the majesty of his appearance."

The performance of this opera, according to our notions, must have had a grotesque effect, as the performers, who were half Italian and half English,

spoke and sung their respective languages; but everything on the stage is so conventional, that this absurdity seems to have passed off with as little notice as others, perhaps not much smaller, do now.

Several other operas were afterwards brought out in the same manner, and with the same *éclat* on the part of Nicolini. *Hydaspes* is still well known to the readers of the *Spectator*, from the admirable humour of Addison's papers, where he laughs at the famous combat between the hero and the lion. He does justice to Nicolini, however, in a graver tone. "It gives me a just indignation," he says, "to see a person whose action gives new dignity to kings, resolution to heroes, and softness to lovers, thus sinking from the greatness of his behaviour, and degraded into the character of the *London 'Prentice*. I have often wished that our tragedians would copy after this great master in action. Could they make the same use of their arms and legs, and inform their faces with as significant looks and passions, how glorious would an English tragedy appear, with that action which is capable of giving a dignity to the forced thoughts, cold conceits, and unnatural expressions of an Italian opera!"

Such was the state of the Italian opera when Handel arrived in this country. As the history of this illustrious man involves, in a great measure, the history of music in England for nearly half a century after this period, a sketch of his life may here be introduced with propriety.

GEORGE FREDERICK HANDEL was born on the 24th of February, 1684, at Halle, in Saxony. His father, who was a physician, had intended him for the pro-

fession of the law; and, with this view, strove to check the propensity towards music which his son showed, even in his earliest years. He excluded from his house all musical society, and would not permit an instrument of any kind to be seen or heard in it. A childish love for music or painting, even accompanied with an aptitude to learn something of these arts, is not, in one case out of a hundred, or rather a thousand, conjoined with that degree of genius without which it would be a vain and idle pursuit. In the general case, therefore, it is wise to check such propensities, where they appear likely to divert or incapacitate the youthful mind from graver occupations. But, on the other hand, the judgment of the parent of a gifted child ought to be shown, by his discerning the "*mens divinior*," as soon as it manifests itself, and then bestowing on it every care and culture.

Handel's father does not appear to have had the power of discovering that his son was one of those who are born once in a thousand years. The child, notwithstanding his parent's precautions, found means to hear somebody play on the harpsichord; and the delight he felt prompted him to endeavour to gain the opportunity of trying to practise what he had heard. He accordingly contrived, by the aid of a servant, to procure a small clavichord (an instrument of the piano-forte species, resembling that which was so long known in England, under the name of the spinet), which he hid in a garret. Thither he repaired every night when the family had gone to rest; and, with no other assistance than what nature gave, he contrived to play on the instrument,

and to discover its powers of producing harmony as well as melody.

When Handel was about seven years old, his father determined to pay a visit to a son by a former wife, who was then living with the Duke of Saxe-Weissenfels; and the young musician begged permission to accompany him. On being refused, he watched the departure of the carriage, which he followed a little way, with tears and entreaties, till his father relented and took him in. When they arrived at the court of the duke, the child was allowed to wander about the apartments of the palace, and could not resist the temptation of sitting down to a harpsichord whenever he fell in with one. This attracted no particular notice; but, one morning, finding means, after service, to slip into the chapel, he began to touch the organ before the duke had gone out. The duke was struck by the singular style of the playing, and asked who was at the organ. He was told by his attendant, that it was his half-brother, a little boy, about seven years old. The duke sent for Handel and his father; and expressing his admiration of the boy's genius, advised his father to allow him to study music. The old man persisted in his desire that his son should adhere to the law; but the duke, with superior sense and discernment, told him, that he certainly had a right to dispose of his son as he thought best, and that, in the general case, such a resolution might be very proper; but that his persisting in it, in such circumstances, would not only be marring the boy's prospects, but robbing his country of talents that would be an honour to it. The father yielded to

these persuasions; and young Handel was not only allowed to pursue his musical studies, but received the assistance of a master.

On his return to Halle, he was placed under Zachau, the organist of the cathedral, a very good musician, who seems to have acted, in regard to so extraordinary a pupil, with great good sense. After instructing him in the general principles of the art, he placed before him the works of the greatest masters, both Italian and German; and, instead of following the ordinary course, of prescribing the works of some favourite author as a model, he contented himself with making his pupil well acquainted with them all, leaving him to form a style for himself. Handel, thus becoming familiar with the great and the beautiful, in every style, acquired the most enlarged views of composition; and his progress was such, that before he was nine years old, he composed some *motets* of such merit, that they were adopted in the service of the church.

When he was thirteen years of age, Handel felt that he was beyond any instructions that Halle could furnish; and his father was advised to send him to Berlin. Here his precocious talents soon attracted general attention; and the king proposed to send him to Italy. This favour, for what reason does not appear, his father declined, and he returned to Halle. Soon afterwards his father died, and it became necessary for him to act for himself. Several places of residence were placed in his view; but, as Hamburgh was then highly celebrated for the excellence of its opera, he determined to settle there.

The following account of Handel's stay at Hamburgh

is given by Mattheson, who was himself a composer of considerable note, and a very able writer on music.

"Almost his first acquaintance here was myself. I met him at the organ of St. Mary's church, whence I conducted him to my father's house, where he was treated with all possible kindness and hospitality. I afterwards attended him to organs, choirs, operas, and concerts; and recommended him to several scholars. At first he only played a *ripieno** violin in the opera orchestra, and being naturally inclined to indulge in a kind of dry humour, pretended unusual ignorance, in a manner that made the most serious people laugh, though he preserved his own gravity. But his superior abilities were soon discovered; for it happened that the harpsichord player of the opera was absent for a time, and he was persuaded to take his place; on which occasion he showed himself to be a great master, to the astonishment of every one, except myself, who had frequent opportunities of knowing his abilities on keyed instruments."

At this period, when Handel and Mattheson met, Handel was nineteen, and Mattheson two and twenty. These young performers used to have frequent contests for pre-eminence on keyed instruments; when, according to Mattheson's account, he sometimes was thought a match for Handel on the harpsichord, but Handel had constantly the advantage on the organ. Upon a vacancy in an organist's place at Lubeck, the two young men travelled thither in the stage-waggon, for the pur-

* In an orchestra, the violins who play in unison with the principal violin, are called *ripieno* violins.

pose of becoming candidates; and Handel's powers on the organ astonished every body. But they were prevented from starting as candidates, by discovering, that an appendage, not to their taste, was annexed to the organist's place, which was no other than a wife—and one, too, who was to be nominated by the electors. Thinking this too great an honour, they made a precipitate retreat, and returned to Hamburgh.

As it appeared that the two friends excelled on different instruments,—the one on the organ, and the other on the harpsichord,—they agreed not to encroach on each other's province; and this compact was preserved for several years, till a circumstance happened, which caused a breach of it. An opera was composed by Mattheson, called *Cleopatra*, in which he himself performed the part of Anthony, and Handel played the harpsichord in the orchestra. Mattheson, upon the death of Anthony, which happened early in the piece, resumed his own person, and came into the orchestra, for the purpose of taking his usual post at the harpsichord; Handel, however, did not consider himself obliged to relinquish a post, which on this occasion had been necessarily assigned to him. This produced so violent a quarrel, that, as they were leaving the house, Mattheson gave Handel a slap on the face, and, drawing their swords, they proceeded to fight it out in the market-place. Luckily Mattheson's sword broke against one of his antagonist's metal buttons, or, as others say, against the score of Mattheson's opera, which Handel had buttoned under his coat; Mattheson's music having thus become the guardian angel of his friend.

This rencontre happened on the 5th of December, 1704; but "the young man's wrath is like flax on fire;" and in a few days the combatants were greater friends than ever. This Mattheson tells us, and adds, that on the 30th of the same month, he accompanied his friend to the rehearsal of his first opera, *Almeria*, and performed the principal character in it. This opera, the production of a youth of twenty, proved so great a favourite with the public, as to be performed thirty nights successively. It was followed by three others, *Nerone*, *Florinda*, and *Dafne;* all of which were successful.

Handel had, by this time, saved money enough to accomplish what is, or ought to be, the great object of every young musician,—a visit to Italy. He had received an invitation from the prince of Tuscany, brother to the grand-duke, who had heard his operas at Hamburgh. He accordingly went to Florence; and, soon after his arrival, composed the opera of *Roderigo;* for which he was honoured by the grand-duke with a present of a hundred sequins and a service of plate. The duke's mistress, Vittoria, sang the principal part. Handel was young and handsome; and it has been said that she had conceived a passion for him, which, but for his prudence, might have involved them both in ruin.

Handel afterwards visited Venice, Rome, and Naples. At Venice he produced the opera of *Agrippina*, which was performed for twenty-seven nights successively. At Rome he composed his serenata, called *Il Trionfo del Tempo;* and at Naples he produced *Acis and Galatea;* a piece totally different from the serenata which afterwards became so celebrated in England under that title.

On his return to Germany, he resided for some time at Hanover; and the connexion between that court and that of London suggested to him the idea of visiting England. He first, however, returned to his native town, to pay his filial duty to his aged mother. While he was preparing to set out for England, the elector of Hanover, afterwards George the First, granted him a pension of fifteen hundred crowns a year; which, however, Handel would not accept unless he were permitted to go to England; and this being made known to the elector, leave of absence was granted to him. His arrival in England, the greatest event in our musical history, took place in the year 1710.

At that time, the theatre in the Haymarket was under the management of Aaron Hill; who, hearing of the arrival of a musician whose great reputation had preceded him, immediately applied to him to compose an opera. The subject of it, taken from Tasso, was sketched by Hill himself, and the outline filled up by Rossi, an Italian dramatist of considerable eminence. The opera was entitled *Rinaldo*. It was sneered at in the fifth number of the *Spectator*, by Addison, who, in total ignorance of its merits, affects to treat it with contempt, laughing at the preface, and telling us that the poet "calls Mynheer Handel the Orpheus of our age, and acquaints the public that he composed this opera in a fortnight." Addison knew as little of Italian poetry as of Italian music, or music of any kind, otherwise he would not have committed his critical fame by ridiculing the poetry of Tasso, on the faith of Boileau's unjust antithesis of "l'or de Virgile, et le clinquant du Tasse," or talked slightingly of the greatest musician the world

ever saw. Pope, with no greater knowledge or feeling of Handel's merit, afterwards so happily availed himself of the general opinion, as to pay him a fine compliment on his power of wielding the strength of a vast orchestra.

> ——— Lo! giant Handel stands,
> Like bold Briareus, with his hundred hands.

Notwithstanding Addison's prejudiced hostility, Rinaldo was highly successful, and established the composer's fame in this country. The principal character was performed by Nicolini. It was represented, for the first time, on the 24th of February, 1711, and continued to be performed, without interruption, till the end of the season. Addison's enmity was, doubtless, occasioned by the fate of his own *Rosamond;* and he continued, with the aid of his friend Steele, to make the *Spectator* the vehicle of many attacks (very amusing ones, it must be owned) on the Italian opera. He attempted to laugh the public out of "the absurdity" of going to an opera written in a foreign language. But he was completely unsuccessful; and this "absurdity" has been found so irresistibly attractive, that all the ridicule of philosophers and wits has never been able to make any impression upon it. Indeed, everybody who knows anything of the matter is quite aware that there is no absurdity in the case.

Handel was now urged, by the most distinguished *dilettanti*, to fix his residence in England; but his sense of duty to his benefactor, the elector of Hanover, induced him to resist these solicitations. When he returned to Hanover, he found that Steffani had resigned to him the place of *maestro di capella*. He remained

for about two years in that situation; and was then permitted to revisit England, his pension remaining as before. He arrived in England in the end of 1712. In the year following, the treaty of Utrecht being concluded, a public thanksgiving was ordered, and Handel was commanded by the Queen to compose a *Te Deum* and *Jubilate*, which were performed in St. Paul's cathedral,—the Queen herself attending the service. He immediately resumed, with continued success, his occupation of writing Italian operas.

On the death of Queen Anne, in 1714, when the elector of Hanover came over to assume the sovereignty of Britain, Handel was out of favour, in consequence of having failed in his engagement to return to Hanover, and also, it is said, of his having composed a *Te Deum* in celebration of an event, which, in the king's views of politics, was by no means considered auspicious. To avert the king's displeasure, Handel's old patron, Baron Kilmansegge, contrived an expedient which does much credit to his friendship and good-nature. Having arranged a party of pleasure on the Thames, and prevailed on the king to join it, he advised Handel to prepare some music for the occasion. Handel, accordingly, composed his celebrated "Water-music," a piece composed for wind-instruments, and calculated to produce a very pleasing effect when performed on the water. This music was performed in a barge which followed that of the king; and his majesty, charmed with its beauty, asked who was the composer. The baron then said, that it was the production of a faithful servant of his majesty, who, conscious of the cause of displeasure he had given so gracious a protector, durst

not approach the royal presence till he had received his majesty's forgiveness. The intercession was effectual: Handel was restored to favour, of which he received substantial tokens. The pension of two hundred pounds, formerly allowed him by Queen Anne, was doubled; and, a few years afterwards, when he was employed to teach the princesses, an additional pension of two hundred pounds was granted him by Queen Caroline.

These agreeable circumstances determined Handel to make England his permanent abode. His acquaintance was sought by persons of high rank; and, among others, by the accomplished earl of Burlington, in whose mansion he took up his residence. Under this nobleman's roof he was left at full liberty to pursue the course of life most agreeable to him; with no other call upon him than that of occasionally directing the earl's concerts, in which his own compositions generally formed the most prominent part. Here he resided for three years, during which period he produced and published three operas,—*Amadigi*, *Teseo*, and *Il Pastor Fido*, besides a variety of detached compositions, vocal and instrumental.

In the year 1718, he received an invitation from the duke of Chandos, to undertake the direction of the music of the chapel, at his superb mansion of Cannons. While in this situation, he composed his celebrated anthems, a great number of instrumental pieces, the serenata of *Acis and Galatea*, and the oratorio of *Esther*.

The establishment of the opera had been languishing; and a total suspension of performances took place from the summer of 1717, till the establishment of the Royal

Academy of Music, in 1720. At that time, a plan was formed for supporting and carrying on the Italian opera, on a magnificent scale. The sum of fifty thousand pounds was raised by subscription, among the first personages in the kingdom, including the king; and the above-mentioned establishment was formed, to be conducted by the nobility and gentry themselves, by means of a governor and a body of directors, all persons of distinction.

The directors determined to engage a lyric poet, the most eminent composers, and the best performers in Europe, for the exclusive service of this institution. Handel was drawn from his residence at Cannons; Bononcini was brought from Rome; and Attilio Ariosti from Berlin. Handel, besides his own engagement as composer, received a commission to engage performers. With this view he went to the Continent, and engaged several eminent singers, among whom was the celebrated Senesino.

The new establishment began by performing several operas by Handel and Bononcini. This composer was possessed of considerable merit; and, though far inferior to Handel, proved, for a long time, a formidable rival to him. The comparative excellence of these masters became the subject of a violent feud, which agitated the musical world, and occasioned the lines of Swift:

> Some say that Signor Bononcini,
> Compared to Handel 's a mere ninny;
> While others say that, to him, Handel
> Is hardly fit to hold a candle.
> Strange, that such difference should be
> 'Twixt tweedle-dum and tweedle-dee!

In 1721, the opera of *Muzio Scevola* was performed. It was the joint work of the three composers to the establishment; Attilio having composed the first act, Bononcini the second, and Handel the third. It has been said that this division was made for the purpose of placing the abilities of the different masters in competition; but most probably it was merely for the sake of despatch. The public, however, chose to dispute violently on the subject; and though the palm was generally assigned to Handel, yet his rivals were not defeated. They continued to be employed; and several of their operas were afterwards performed with applause.

In 1723, Handel produced the opera of *Otho*, which became the most popular of all his Italian compositions. Almost every song in it was sung, or played, throughout the kingdom; and the famous *gavot*, at the end of the overture, has been in constant use, on every sort of instrument, "from the organ to the salt-box," to use Burney's phrase, for a century. Though it is disagreeable to hear a fine melody vulgarized by being bawled or ground about the streets, yet this very degradation is the strongest proof of its excellence.

In this opera, the famous Signora Cuzzoni made her first appearance in England; and, in 1726, her equally celebrated rival, Faustina, appeared in Handel's *Alessandro*. Cuzzoni had, at this time, acquired many partisans, to whom the directors of the academy, by engaging a rival, gave deep umbrage; and another feud took place, not only more violent than that respecting Handel and Bononcini, but more violent than anything that, in the present "age of reason," can be conceived.

The conduct of the parties in this warfare affords an amusing picture of the manners of a former age. Ladies of fashion not only copied the dresses of their respective heroines; but made their pretensions the subject of personal quarrels, and the most indecorous displays of hostility. The following account of one of these contests is given in the *London Journal*, in 1727. "A great disturbance happened at the opera, occasioned by the partisans of the two rival ladies, Cuzzoni and Faustina. The contention, at first, was only carried on by hissing on one side, and clapping on the other; but proceeded, at length, to the melodious use of cat-calls and other accompaniments, which manifested the zeal of the illustrious assembly. The princess Caroline was there; but neither her royal highness' presence, nor the laws of decorum, could restrain the glorious ardour of the combatants." On one occasion, the two signoras came into personal conflict, and were not separated till they had left bloody marks of their hostility. The battle among their titled patronesses was carried on by the less vulgar, but more envenomed weapons of abuse and slander, disseminated in all sorts of shapes,—in conversation, paragraphs, epigrams, and lampoons. The following epigram, aimed at the countess of Pembroke, the leader of the Cuzzoni faction, is a specimen of the weapons employed by the combatants:—

Old poets sing, that brutes once danced,
When Orpheus deigned to play;
Now, to Faustina's charming voice,
Wise Pembroke's asses bray.

The continuance of this feud proving very injurious to the interests of the opera, the directors contrived to put an end to it by a manœuvre. The time for a new contract with each of the singers was at hand: and Cuzzoni's noble patrons had made her swear upon the Gospels never to take a less salary than her rival. The directors agreed among themselves to give Faustina one guinea a year more than Cuzzoni; and, as they continued firm to their resolution, poor Cuzzoni, ensnared by her oath, had nothing for it but to leave the kingdom.

The end of Cuzzoni's career formed a sad contrast to the brilliancy of its commencement. She left England in 1729; but returned twice afterwards,—the last time in 1749. Her voice, however, was now feeble and thin, and all her attractions were gone. She had been remarkable, in the days of her splendour, for extravagance and caprice; and, when the resource of her talents failed, she sank into utter wretchedness. About the year 1770, she was gaining a livelihood in Italy by making buttons,—was afterwards thrown into prison for debt, and died in extreme indigence at Bologna. Her rival, Faustina, had a very different fate. She was a woman of sense and prudence; and, as we have already mentioned, married the celebrated composer Hasse, and died at Venice, at the age of ninety.

The feuds of these rival sirens were a source of constant annoyance and injury to Handel. The preparation and performance of his operas were deranged by their quarrels, and consequent insubordination; and a

man of less firmness would have been altogether at a stand. But he took the most energetic ways of enforcing obedience. On one occasion, Cuzzoni made some absurd objection to one of his airs, and refused, at a rehearsal, to sing it; on which, Handel, after rating her for her habitual stubbornness, took her round the waist, and threatened to throw her out of the window.

In 1728, Handel's opera of *Ptolemy* was performed. It was the last which he composed for the Royal Academy of Music. In his dedication to the earl of Albemarle, he implores the protection of that nobleman for operas in general, as "being on the decline." That the Italian opera was on the decline, notwithstanding the talents of the greatest composer, and finest singers in Europe, is evident from the ruinous state of the establishment; the receipts having been so inadequate, that the whole fifty thousand pounds originally subscribed, was by this time expended. The affairs of the opera, doubtless had been injured by the feuds between the singers and their adherents; but their situation must also be ascribed to the want of love for that species of music. It had been the *fashion*, for awhile, to patronise the Italian theatre; but, at this time, the object of real attraction was the *Beggar's Opera*, which then enjoyed a favour amounting to infatuation. There is a letter of the celebrated Dr. Arbuthnot, in the *London Journal* of the year 1728, which contains the following pungent passage: "*The Beggar's Opera* I take to be a touchstone to try British taste on; and it has accordingly proved effectual in discovering our true inclinations; which, how artfully soever they may

have been disguised for awhile, will one time or other start up and disclose themselves. Æsop's story of the cat, who, at the petition of her lover, was changed into a fine woman, is pretty well known: notwithstanding which alteration, we find, that upon the appearance of a mouse, she could not resist the temptation of springing out of her husband's arms to pursue it, though it was on the very wedding night. Our English audience have been for some time returning to their cattish nature, of which some particular sounds from the gallery have given us sufficient warning; and since they have so openly declared themselves, I must only desire they will not think they can put on the fine woman again, just when they please, but content themselves with their skill in catterwauling." How much of this cattish nature may still be detected among the numbers who expire at the strains of Pasta or Grisi, we shall not stop to inquire.

Whatever might have been the causes of the decline of the opera, its effect was, that the gentlemen who had embarked in the concern declined to come under any new engagements for carrying it on; and, at the close of the season, the whole of the singers dispersed, and went abroad in search of other engagements.

On the fall of the Royal Academy of Music, the King's Theatre fell into the hands of Mr. Heidegger, a person of some note in the annals of fashion. With him Handel entered into a contract for five years; and immediately went to the Continent to engage a new company. His return in the autumn of 1729 is announced in the newspapers by the following curious advertisement.—"Mr. Handel, who is just returned

from Italy, has contracted with the following persons to perform in the Italian operas:—Signor Bernacchi, who is esteemed the best singer in Italy. Signora Merighi, a woman of very fine presence, an excellent actress, and a very good singer, with a counter-tenor voice. Signora Strada, who has a very fine treble voice, a person of singular merit. Signor Annibale Pio Fabri, a most excellent tenor, and a fine voice. His wife, who performs a man's part exceedingly well. Signora Bertoldi, who has a very fine treble voice; she is also a very genteel actress, both in men and women's parts. A base voice from Hamburgh, there being none worth engaging in Italy." This anonymous base voice was *John Gottfreid Reimschneider*,—a cluster of gutturals, that would have sounded oddly among so many liquid Italian syllables.

Notwithstanding the above pompous announcement, it does not appear that any of Handel's new singers were of first-rate talent; and, perhaps for this reason, the undertaking was not very successful, though one of the operas produced at this time (*Parthenope*), is considered one of Handel's finest dramatic works. In consequence of this failure, the celebrated Senesino, who had belonged to the former company, was again engaged, though Handel and he had previously been on bad terms. Still, notwithstanding the powerful aid of this great performer, it does not appear that the undertaking was much more flourishing than before.

In the season of 1732, Handel began his career as a composer of *Oratorios*, by producing *Esther*, at the Opera-house. The terms in which the first performance of an oratorio in England was announced to the

public, are interesting. "By his majesty's command," says the advertisement, "at the King's Theatre, in the Haymarket, on Tuesday, the 2d of May, will be performed the sacred story of *Esther;* an oratorio in English, formerly composed by Mr. Handel, and now revised by him with several additions, and to be performed by a great number of voices and instruments. N. B. There will be no acting on the stage, but the house will be fitted up in a decent manner for the audience. The music to be disposed after the manner of the coronation service. Tickets to be delivered at the usual prices." Notwithstanding this announcement, however, it appears that the prodigious success of this entertainment induced Handel afterwards to raise the prices of admission to a guinea, and half-a-guinea for the gallery,—a measure that gave much offence to the subscribers to the opera.

At this period, Handel's *Acis and Galatea* was performed, apparently without his sanction, by an English company of performers, at the Haymarket theatre; on which occasion it was acted like a play. This produced an announcement from Handel, in these terms: "June the 10th, will be performed, *Acis and Galatea*, a serenata, revised, with several additions, at the Opera-house, by a great number of the best voices and instruments. *There will be no acting on the stage;* but the scene will represent, in a picturesque manner, a rural prospect with rocks, groves, fountains, and grottoes, among which will be disposed a chorus of nymphs and shepherds, the habits, and every other decoration suited to the subject." This charming serenata has been constantly performed, from Handel's time to the

present, without any theatrical action. Some attempts have lately been made to bring it out as a regular opera,—injudiciously, we think, as neither the structure of the story, nor the style of the music, are adapted for dramatic action. The proper way to perform it, undoubtedly, is that indicated by Handel himself,—that is, without action, but with the picturesque scenes and decorations which he describes.

In 1733, Handel produced the opera of *Orlando*, the last he composed for Senesino; for the differences which long subsisted between them, now broke out into an open rupture. It has been remarked, that the terms on which Handel was with Senesino, injured the music which he composed for this singer.

A number of English composers, the chief of whom was Arne, were now candidates for public favour, in opposition to Handel. Arne new-set Addison's opera of *Rosamond*, and other English operas and oratorios were brought out at the Haymarket theatre. These attempts at rivalry were not very successful; but they tended to withdraw the public attention from the Italian opera; and their authors thus injured Handel, with little benefit to themselves. A more formidable opposition, however, now sprang up. The subscribers to the opera, who had taken offence at Handel's conduct, in performing oratorios at advanced prices on opera-nights, and who, further, appear to have espoused the cause of the singers, in his disputes with them, entered into a new subscription, for the performance of operas in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, and engaged the celebrated Porpora as composer. They also engaged as singers, Cuzzoni, Senesino, and Fa-

rinelli,—perhaps still the greatest singer that has ever existed.

Handel, meanwhile, having entered into a renewed agreement with Heidegger, again went to Italy to engage performers. At Bologna, he heard Farinelli and Carestini; and committed the surprising error in judgment of preferring the latter,—leaving Farinelli to be engaged by his opponents.

The history of Handel's life, for some years, presents nothing but an arduous and calamitous struggle against the difficulties which surrounded him. To the persevering hostility of the nobility, the talents of Porpora, and the unparelleled popularity of Farinelli, he opposed the most vigorous exertions of his matchless strength, which enabled him, at times, to achieve splendid triumphs. During this time he produced a number of admirable operas; among which was *Ariadne*, one of the most brilliant of his productions. He set to music Dryden's *Ode on St. Cecilia's Day*, which was produced under the title of *Alexander's Feast*, with unprecedented success; and composed his oratorios of *Athalia* and *Deborah*.

During this unavailing struggle, Handel was obliged to draw out of the funds the whole fortune, to the extent of ten thousand pounds, which he had accumulated in his more prosperous days. Both his mind and body gave way under the pressure of his calamities. He laboured under a depression of spirits, amounting, according to one of his biographers, to insanity; and he had a stroke of palsy. In this situation he was removed to Tunbridge; but his state of body and mind becoming worse and worse, he was, with much diffi-

culty, prevailed on to go to Aix-la-Chapelle. There he received so much benefit from the waters, and so much greater still from quiet and removal from the scene of his troubles, that his health was speedily restored; and, in November, 1737, he returned to London in full possession of his former vigour. He immediately resumed his efforts in behalf of his theatre, and produced several new operas. But he found it impossible to gain the public attention; and, when he attempted to benefit himself by publishing these operas, the subscriptions hardly covered the expense.

In these circumstances, he finally abandoned the opera, and happily turned his thoughts entirely to that species of composition which has rendered his name immortal. To this he was incited by remembering the success of his former oratorios. His imagination was kindled by the sublime poetry of the sacred writings; and he felt (as he himself declared) that this grave style of composition was best suited to the circumstances of a man descending into the vale of years.

In pursuance of this plan, Handel, in January, 1739, produced his oratorio of *Saul*, and, in April following, *Israel in Egypt*. These great works, however, do not appear, at that time, to have made any remarkable impression; and, what is more wonderful still, the *Messiah*, when first performed in 1741, was coldly received. Nothing can account for a circumstance so discreditable to the musical taste of England, but the supposition that the spirit of factious hostility, against which Handel had struggled so long, was still active. The composer resolved to appeal from the injustice of England to the unbiassed feelings of the sister island,

and, accordingly, took his departure for Dublin. To this step Pope alludes, in his well-known lines in the *Dunciad.*

> Strong in new arms, lo! giant Handel stands,
> Like bold Briareus, with his hundred hands;
> To stir, to rouse, to shake the soul, he comes,
> And Jove's own thunders follow Mars's drums.
> Arrest him, goddess! or you sleep no more;—
> She heard, and drove him to the Hibernian shore.

An amusing anecdote is told of his journey to Dublin. Being detained at Chester by contrary winds, and wishing to try some of his music, he inquired if there were any choristers, or others, in the place, who could sing at sight. Among others, a printer, of the name of Janson, was mentioned to him. On the trial of a chorus, poor Janson could make nothing of it, and blundered so egregiously, that Handel, after swearing in half a dozen languages, called out in broken English (the effect of which was always very ludicrous), "You shcaundrel, tit you not dell me dat you could sing at soite?" "Yes, sir," said the object of his ire, "and so I can,—but not at *first sight!*"

The *Messiah* was performed at Dublin, on the 27th of March, 1742. Burney says that this was the first time it was ever performed: but this is an error; and the contrary is proved by the original score, in Handel's own hand-writing, in his majesty's library, which we have examined. The composer (according to his usual custom) has dated it at the beginning, the 22nd of August, 1741; and he has noted at the end, that it was finished on the 12th *, and performed on the 14th

* This, of course, refers to the writing out of the MS., not to the composition of the music.

of September, 1741. The performance in Dublin, with equal humanity and good sense on Handel's part, was for the benefit of the city prison; and this sublimest effort of his mighty mind was received with transports of wonder and delight. The famous Mrs. Cibber was the principal singer, and Dubourg was leader of the orchestra. One evening, Dubourg, having to make a close, *ad libitum*, ventured so far from the original key, that he found it difficult to return to it, and wandered about in considerable perplexity for some time. When he came, at last, to the concluding shake, Handel, to the great enjoyment of the audience, called out, loud enough to be heard in all parts of the house, "Welcome home, welcome home, Mr. Dubourg!" Beside the *Messiah*,—*Esther*, *Acis and Galatea*, *Alexander's Feast*, and other works of Handel, were performed with equal success*.

The following anecdotes respecting the first performance of the *Messiah* are given in the last edition of

* The following is a chronological list of Handel's Oratorios and Cantatas:

Esther	1732	Joshua	1748
Deborah	1733	Solomon	——
Athalia	——	Alexander Balus	——
Saul	1739	Theodora	1749
Israel in Egypt	——	Jephtha	1751
Messiah	1741	*Cantatas.*	
Sampson	1743	Acis and Galatea	1732
Susannah	1744	Alexander's Feast	1736
Joseph	——	Semele	1744
Belshazzar	1745	Hercules	1745
Occasional Oratorio	1746	Triumph of Time and Truth	1757
Judas Maccabeus	——		

the *Biographia Dramatica*, on the authority of the earl of Kinnoul, who died in the year 1787. From the first of them we discover the origin of the custom of the audience standing up during the performance of the *Hallelujah Chorus*. "When this piece was first performed, the audience were exceedingly struck and affected by the music in general; but when the chorus struck up, 'For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth,' they were so transported, that they all, with the king, who happened to be present, started up and remained standing till the chorus was ended: and hence it became the fashion in England for the audience to stand while that part of the music is performing. Some days after the first exhibition of this divine oratorio, Mr. Handel went to pay his respects to Lord Kinnoul, with whom he was particularly acquainted. His lordship, as was natural, paid him some compliments on the noble entertainment which he had lately given to the town. 'My lord,' said Handel, 'I should be sorry if I only entertained them; I wish to make them better.'"

After a residence of eight or nine months in Ireland, which was very beneficial to him, Handel returned to London; and, for some years afterwards, brought out, in succession, the rest of his oratorios. As he had abandoned all concern with the Italian Opera, he had no further animosities on that score to contend with; but, though the *Messiah* was more and more favourably received, and always drew crowded houses, yet the performances of his other oratorios were generally so poorly attended as frequently not to defray his expenses. And it is melancholy to relate, that, so blind were

the English public to the merits of their illustrious musician, that the expenses attending these performances (which were on a large and liberal scale) not only exhausted his funds, but actually rendered him a bankrupt. This circumstance, so discreditable to the nation, happened in 1745. Dr. Burney (to whom all Handel's biographers must be indebted for the most interesting particulars of his life,) mentions, that, on those occasions, when his oratorios were performing to empty houses, Handel used to console his friends, who were lamenting the thinness of the attendance before the curtain drew up, by saying, "Never mind, de moosic vill sound de petter!" In 1749, his *Theodora* was so utterly neglected, that he was glad, for the sake of getting something of an audience, to give orders for admission to any professors who did not perform. Two of these gentlemen having afterwards applied for orders to hear the *Messiah*, he exclaimed, "Oh, your sarvent, mein herrn! you are tamnable dainty! you would not go to *Theodora;* there was room enough to dance there when dat was perform." His Majesty King George the Second, however, steadily supported Handel, and regularly attended his oratorios, when they were deserted by all his court.

The Messiah having raised Handel's reputation so high, and being always so successful when performed, he determined, with the benevolence which belonged to his character, to have it annually performed for the benefit of the Foundling Hospital; and this he continued to do as long as he lived. The organ in the chapel of the hospital was also his gift; and he presented the institution with a fair copy of the score

of the *Messiah*. The directors, with a wonderful degree of ignorance, mistook the nature of the gift; and, supposing it was meant to give them an exclusive right to the performance, they were foolish enough to resolve to apply to Parliament for an Act to that purpose. In the first place, however, it was thought necessary to ask Handel's concurrence, and a deputation accordingly waited upon him to obtain it. But the composer, bursting into a rage, exclaimed in a tone worthy of his own Polyphemus, "Te deyvil! for what sall de Foundlings put mein oratorio in de Parliament? Te deyvil! mein moosic sall not go to de Parliament!"

In his latter years Handel became blind; but this calamity did not diminish his powers as a public performer. It was affecting to see him, at upwards of seventy years of age, led to the organ, and then brought forward to make his usual obeisance to the audience; but even then, the concertos and extempore pieces, which he used to play between the acts of his oratorios, were distinguished by all his wonted strength of imagination, and energy of execution. At this period he was in the practice, even in his regular concertos, of playing the solo parts extempore. The full parts only were written for the orchestra; when he came to his solo, he played it extempore, adhering, of course, to the general design of the piece; and when he indicated, by a shake, that he had come to a close, the band went on with what was written before them. Though his blindness did not impair his intellectual vigour, however, it deeply affected his feelings. He was always much moved during the performance of his own pathetic air, "Total eclipse," in *Samson*.

His last appearance in public was on the 6th of April, 1759, when he performed as usual. He died seven days afterwards. Dr. Warren, who attended him in his last illness, said that he was perfectly sensible of his approaching dissolution, and that he had expressed a wish, for several days before his death, that he might breathe his last on Good Friday, in hopes, as he said, of meeting his Lord and Saviour on the day of his resurrection,—meaning the third day, or Easter Sunday following. His wish was fulfilled. He was buried in Westminster Abbey; and over the place of his interment there is a monument by Roubilliac, consisting of his figure, in an erect posture, and holding a scroll, inscribed with the words "I know that my Redeemer liveth," and the notes to which these words are set in the *Messiah*.

The character of Handel, in all its great features, was exalted and amiable. Throughout his life he had a deep sense of religion. He used to express the great delight he felt in setting to music the most sublime passages of Holy Writ; and the habitual study of the Scriptures had constant influence on his sentiments and conduct. For the last two or three years of his life he regularly attended divine service in his parish church of St. George's, Hanover-square, where his looks and gestures indicated the fervour of his devotion. In his life he was pure and blameless; not possessed of strong passions (for his impetuosity of manner was not the result of passion), not even of very warm affections; but yet friendly and benevolent. To this part of his character may be ascribed his life of celibacy; but to

a higher principle must be imputed his freedom from dishonourable connexions with the female sex.

His few foibles were not of a nature to sully the brightness of his character. The greatest of them certainly was his use of profane expressions, to which, notwithstanding the real piety of his character, he was unbecomingly addicted. For this, however, there was some excuse in the manners of the age, when such expressions were habitual even among the better classes of society. He liked to indulge in good living, but not to an injurious or degrading excess. He was rough and impetuous, but utterly free from malevolence or ill-nature.

His intellect was vigorous and well-cultivated. He was acquainted with Latin, and a master of the Italian language, and understood English well enough to be sensible of the beauties of our poets. His knowledge of our language, indeed, is very apparent from the admirable manner in which the words of his oratorios, notwithstanding occasional errors of accent and prosody, are adapted to the music.

In his person, Handel was large and rather corpulent; his features were very handsome; and his countenance was placid, with an expression of mingled dignity and benevolence. He had a great deal of wit and humour; and, even in his fits of anger or impatience, his sallies of pleasantry, conveyed in his grotesque English, produced merriment rather than uneasiness. He wore an enormous white wig, flowing over his shoulders, which, when things were going well at the oratorio, had a certain vibratory motion, indicative of

his satisfaction. At the rehearsals of his oratorios at Carlton-house, if the prince and princess were not punctual in entering the room he used to be violent; yet such was the reverence with which these illustrious personages (to their honour) treated him, that they never took offence at his freedom; but the prince, admitting that he had cause of complaint, has been heard to say, "Indeed it is cruel to keep these poor people," meaning the performers, "so long from their scholars and other concerns." If the maids of honour, or other female attendants, indulged their loquacious propensities during the rehearsal, our composer's rage was uncontrollable, and sometimes carried him to the length of swearing and calling names, even in the presence of royalty. Yet, at such times, the princess of Wales, with her accustomed mildness, used to say to her attendants, "Hush, hush! Handel is in a passion!"

Notwithstanding his frequent and ruinous losses, and his liberality of character, Handel died possessed of twenty thousand pounds, which, with the exception of a thousand pounds to the fund for the support of decayed musicians, he bequeathed to his relations in Germany.

Handel was the greatest of musicians; and it is not more probable that the lustre of his name shall be dimmed by age, or impaired by successful rivalry, than that any such thing shall befal the names of Homer, Milton, or Michael Angelo. Since his day, indeed, music, in some respects, has been progressive. Melody has become more rhythmical, flowing, and graceful; the powers of instruments have been enlarged, and numberless beautiful and striking effects have been obtained

by successive discoveries in regard to their treatment and combination. Hence the music of the theatre and the chamber has gained greater freedom, variety, and richness; and hence the Italian operas of Handel have shared the fate of all the dramatic music of his day. They have sunk into oblivion, and for ever; for, were their revival attempted, their beauties could not prevent them from appearing dry, constrained, and meagre, to modern ears; and the world could never return to those forms of theatrical composition which, in the progress of taste, have been necessarily abandoned. But the music of the church, the noblest branch of the art, has remained unchanged for generations, and will probably remain unchanged for generations to come. Founded on the great principles of harmony established by the ecclesiastical composers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it is constructed of materials over which time has small power; and the few ornaments which may be applied to it by the varying taste of different ages, can but slightly affect the aspect of its massive and colossal structure. Compared to this, accordingly, all other kinds of music appear to be fleeting and ephemeral. In every country, it is the oldest music that is extant; and, in our own, the walls of our cathedrals may still re-echo the sacred strains of Gibbons and Tallis, Purcell and Boyce, after all the profane music that has been produced, from their days to our own, shall have been swept away. It is on this foundation that Handel has built the stupendous chorusses of his oratorios. Their duration is independent of the mutability of taste or fashion. They make the same impression now as when they were heard for

the first time, and will continue to act on the mind with undiminished power so long as the great principles of human nature shall remain unchanged. In regard to the *airs* of these great sacred works, such of them as are disfigured by long and stiff divisions, formal closes, and other marks of the antiquated taste of the time, are no longer heard with the pleasure they originally conferred: but it is the glory of Handel's genius, that in his moments of inspiration, he broke through the conventional trammels which bound his contemporaries, and imagined those divine melodies which must for ever find their way to the heart. Handel's airs almost uniformly bear the impress of his mind; but some of them resemble a noble or beautiful figure clothed in the cumbrous costume of his day, while others, free from such trappings, display the perfect symmetry and grace of some exquisite remnant of Grecian art. If the chorusses in the *Messiah*, "For unto us a child is born," and the "Hallelujah," shall continue, from age to age, to produce awe and veneration, so shall the airs, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," "He shall feed his flock," and "He was despised and rejected," fill the mind with chastened joy, tenderness, and pity.

The parts of Handel's compositions which will form the most enduring monument to his memory, are those which are capable of producing their effects chiefly by means of the combined powers of human voices; for the more independent music is of the assistance of instruments, the less will it suffer from the influence of time. Changes are incessant in the structure and powers of instruments. Some drop out of use, and

others are invented; while their infinite variety of combinations are constantly assuming new forms, in consequence of the boldness of genius and the caprices of taste. But the voice, in its chief features, is always the same. The most sublime harmony in existence is that which is so broad in its structure that it can be distinctly produced by a great body of voices. Of this description are the *Chorales*, which, in Germany, are composed by the greatest masters, and performed on the most solemn occasions. The greatest of Handel's chorusses are of this character. The different parts are either united in great and solid masses of sound, or responsive to each other in passages of fugue or imitation, which taken by themselves are plain, simple, and distinct phrases of melody, and derive their effect from the manner in which they are combined and blended. Were each of these parts to be sung by so great a number of tuneable and powerful voices as would *fill* the church or other place of performance, no instrumental additions could increase the power of the harmony; and thus the only use of instruments is to create a volume of sound which could not otherwise be obtained. Accordingly, in these chorusses, the instruments are played in unison or in octaves with the different vocal parts; and the design of the composer, and the original structure of his harmony, are in nowise affected, whatever number or variety of instruments are used along with the voices, whether we have only those employed by Handel himself, or the riches of a modern orchestra. Provided, however, that the volume of sound is suited to the magnitude of the place, the more completely it is made up of voices the better; while, on the other hand,

we often find that the grandeur of a chorus is impaired by the voices being smothered by an over proportion of instruments. This comparative independence of the aid of instruments must necessarily give to the sublime chorusses of Handel a longevity which will be denied to the modern compositions of this class, in which the vocal harmony is frequently less prominent than the florid instrumental symphony by which it is accompanied.

The oratorios of Handel, till within a recent period, were almost unknown in his own country. They are now, however, performed on a great scale, and under the direction of the first masters, in every part of Germany. In France, too, they are beginning to be well known. In Britain they now, we are convinced, receive a greater degree of attention than they have met with at any former period; and they will be more and more extensively studied and performed as musical knowledge and taste shall diffuse themselves. Our error is, that we confine ourselves to a few of them, neglecting, in a great measure, the others; but this error is now so generally acknowledged, that its correction may with some confidence be expected. When we see some of these works, which are never heard in England, forming the chief features of the great annual festivals on the banks of the Rhine and the Danube, we ought to be ashamed of neglecting any of the compositions of the greatest musician the world ever saw, who devoted all the energies of his mighty mind to the service of our own country.

CHAPTER IX.

MUSIC IN ITALY DURING THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.—STEFFANI. —CLARI.—DURANTE.—MARCELLO.—PORPORA.—PEREZ.—HASSE. —LEO.—VINCI.—FEO.—PERGOLESI.

THE beginning of the eighteenth century was the Augustan age of Italian music. The masters, of whose labours we have already spoken, had gradually shown that the great charm of the art consists in a flowing, hythmical, and expressive *melody*, to which the combinations of harmony, however ingenious and elaborate, are merely accessories. From this period the refinement of melody became the chief object of attention among the Italian composers, while harmony became gradually less and less cultivated. For a time, however, and by the constellation of musicians who flourished towards the beginning of the century, the beauties of melody were heightened by all the resources of counterpoint; most of those great masters having devoted their talents to the church as well as the theatre and the chamber. But, by degrees, the profound and learned ecclesiastical style of the old musicians disappeared, and the solemn services of the church became almost as light and airy as the pieces for the theatre; an air in an oratorio or a mass differing in nothing but the words from an opera song. Still the Italians, during the eighteenth century, maintained their ground in dramatic music against the German school, which was rapidly advancing to its present pre-eminence.

We shall now give some account of the most distinguished among the composers who flourished in Italy about the beginning of the last century.

Agostino Steffani, born in 1650, was a composer of great excellence for the church, the theatre, and the chamber. He was appointed chapel-master at the court of Hanover by the duke of Brunswick, father of George the First. He appears to have been a man of extraordinary endowments, for he was employed in important diplomatic affairs; and, for his conduct in the measure of erecting the duchy of Brunswick Luneburg into an electorate, he received a pension of 1500 rix-dollars per annum. He was also made bishop of Spigna by Pope Innocent the Eleventh. In consequence of this elevation, he resigned his office of chapel-master in favour of Handel, in 1708. In 1724 he was elected President of the Academy of Ancient Music in London, and died in 1730. His works consist of masses and other compositions for the church; several operas; with madrigals and other pieces for chamber performances. His duets for two voices, with an accompaniment for a bass, are remarkable for beauty of melody and ingenuity of contrivance.

Carlo Maria Clari was chapel-master of the Cathedral of Pistoia. His chamber duets and trios, published in 1720, are very similar in character to those of Steffani.

The composer of that age, whose writings have remained longest in general favour, was Francesco Durante. This admirable musician was born in 1693, and was long master of the Conservatorio (or Music-school) of St. Onophrio, at Naples. He numbered

among his disciples almost the whole of the eminent men who supported the musical fame of Italy during the eighteenth century,—Pergolesi, Terradellas, Piccini, Traetta, Sacchini, Paesiello, and Guglielmi. His duets are to this day looked upon as perfect models in this species of composition, whether we regard the grace of the melody, the admirable expression given to the words, or the consummate skill displayed in the modulations and in the combination of the parts. They are still considered, in France and Germany, as well as in Italy, as the most valuable studies for young composers. Sacchini, who used to teach them to his favourite scholars, seldom finished his lesson without kissing the book. An excellent edition of them was published some years ago at Paris, under the immediate superintendance of Cherubini, one of the most accomplished musicians now living.

Benedetto Marcello was born at Venice in 1686, of one of the noblest families of that republic. His musical compositions were very numerous, consisting of psalms, operas, madrigals, and songs. He was also a poet, and wrote several of the dramatic pieces which he set to music. His great work, still well known to musicians, is his *Psalms*. It is a paraphrase of the first fifty Psalms, written by Ascanio Giustiniani, and set to music in one, two and three vocal parts, by Marcello; published in 1724 and 1725. There is a fine English edition of this work, in eight folio volumes, which was set on foot by Mr. Avison, author of the *Essay on Musical Expression*, and accomplished by Mr. Garth of Durham, who adapted to the music, words from our prose translation of the Psalms. Mar-

cello's Psalms have received more and less than justice from different critics. While Avison's praise is somewhat exaggerated, Burney's censure is too severe. Burney ascribes the "over-praise" which Marcello received, partly, at least, to his nobility; but, however much this consideration may have operated during his life, it can hardly account for the elevated rank which has been assigned to him as a musician, by the greatest writers on the art. It is enough to mention Padre Martini of Bologna, who, in his celebrated *Saggio di Contrapunto* (Essay on Counterpoint), mentions Marcello as one of the greatest masters of the Venetian school. The work in question is certainly worthy of the author's reputation. It is full of beautiful and expressive melodies; the contexture of the vocal parts is admirable; and there is great boldness and variety in the modulations and harmonies. The music, however, is somewhat too light and dramatic; it is defective in the severe simplicity, and grave solemnity, which ought to characterize the ecclesiastical style. Marcello's *Psalms* have now become a rare book; but extracts are to be found in different collections of sacred music; and some movements of them are occasionally heard at concerts.

Among Marcello's literary productions, which are numerous, there is a satire, entitled *Teatro alla moda*, or, "An easy and certain method of composing and performing Italian operas after the modern manner." It is amusing to observe how pointedly the sarcasms against the *modern* fashions of 1720, are applicable to the modes of our own day.

The satire is levelled against poets as well as com-

posers. "The modern poet," says the author, "should completely abstain from reading the ancient writers, for this reason, that the ancient writers never read the moderns. Before entering upon his task he will take an exact note of the quantity and quality of the scenes which the manager is desirous of introducing into his drama. He will compose his poem verse by verse, without giving himself any trouble as to the action, in order that it may be impossible for the spectator to comprehend the plot, and that curiosity may thus be kept alive to the end of the piece. By the way, he will not forget to close the piece with a brilliant and magnificent scene, terminating in a grand chorus in honour of the sun, the moon, or the manager. He will have recourse as frequently as possible to the dagger, to poison, to earthquakes, spectres, and incantations. All these expedients are admirable; they cost but little, and produce a prodigious effect on the public."

The satirist thus instructs the composer:—"The modern composer has no occasion for a knowledge of the rules of composition; practice, and a few general principles, will be quite sufficient. Nor has he any occasion for an acquaintance with poetry; he need not even be able to distinguish a long syllable from a short one. He will do well *not* to read the poem before setting it to music, for fear of over-loading his imagination and oppressing his genius. He will compose the music verse by verse, and will not fail to adjust to the words such airs as he has composed in the course of the year, even though the metre and the expression should be at perfect variance with his ideas. He will

produce no airs but such as are accompanied by the whole orchestra; for, in order to compose in the modern taste, it is indispensable, above all things, to make plenty of noise. As to the singers, they should take care never to practise solfaing, for fear of falling into the old-fashioned custom of singing in tune and time: both which things are at absolute variance with the taste of the day. And not only will they change the *time* of the airs, but also the airs themselves, though their variations are in direct opposition to the bass and the whole of the instruments."

Any "*laudator temporis acti*" of our own day, wishing to expose the present vices of the musical stage, in regard to poetry, composition, and performance, would handle the subject exactly as Marcello did above a century ago. He would talk of the degradation of the musical drama by its conversion into a spectacle, *full of spectres and incantations;* of the determination of the composers, above all things, *to make plenty of noise;* and of the unmeaning and vicious flourishes with which the airs are loaded by uneducated singers: and he would recal, with a sigh, the golden days when the Italian opera flourished in all its beauty and purity. And yet it was in those very golden days that Marcello's satire was written—in the days when Apostolo Zeno was in his zenith, and Metastasio was appearing on the horizon—when the music of the Italian stage was composed by Leo, Vinci, Porpora, Steffani, and Clari, and sung by Faustina, Cuzzoni, Caffarelli, and Farinelli. At a period, too, considerably later, but still at a time when the Italian school retained much of the excellence which it is now universally admitted to

have lost, we find, in the correspondence of Metastasio*, the same complaints of the ignorance and bad taste of his contemporaries, and the same regretful looking back to past days, in which Marcello indulged before him, in which we indulge after him, and in which our posterity will indulge after us, so long as human nature shall remain what it is.

Marcello, notwithstanding his devotion to music and poetry, held important offices in the state, and was distinguished for his activity in the discharge of his public duties. He died at Brescia in 1739.

Nicolo Porpora was born at Naples in 1689. He received his musical education from Alessandro Scarlatti, by whose instructions he was rendered a consummate musician. He began his career at Vienna, where his merit was not at first appreciated, as he remained for some time in obscurity. M. Stendhal, in his *Life of Haydn*, gives an amusing anecdote of Porpora at this period. "In the time of Charles the Sixth," says that writer, "the celebrated Porpora lived at Vienna, poor and unemployed. His music did not please the imperial connoisseur, as being too full of *trills* and *mordenti*. Hasse wrote an oratorio for the emperor, who asked him for a second. He entreated his Majesty to permit Porpora to compose it. The emperor at first refused, saying that he did not like that capering style; but, touched with Hasse's generosity, he at length complied with his request. Porpora, having received a hint from his friend, did not introduce a single trill in the whole oratorio. The emperor, surprised, continually repeated

* See Burney's *Life of Metastasio.*

during the rehearsal,—'Tis quite a different thing,—there are no trills here!' But when they came to the fugue which concluded the sacred composition, he observed that the theme commenced with four trilled notes. Now every body knows, that in fugues the subject passes from one part to another, but does not change. When the emperor, who was privileged never to laugh, heard, in the full height of the fugue, this deluge of trills, which seemed like the music of crazy people in a palsy, he could no longer preserve his gravity, and laughed outright, perhaps for the first time in his life. In France, the land of jokes, this might have appeared out of place; but at Vienna it was the commencement of Porpora's fortune."

Porpora's first opera, *Ariana e Teseo*, performed at Vienna in 1717, laid the foundation of his reputation, which immediately extended throughout Europe. After a splendid course of success in Germany and Italy, he came to England in 1733, having been invited by a party of the nobility and gentry to conduct the Opera established by them in opposition to the party who patronised Handel. Notwithstanding, however, the support which he received from Handel's opponents, his own acknowledged ability, and the aid he received from the unrivalled singing of Farinelli, he was unable to withstand his gigantic adversary; and, after maintaining the unequal contest for several years, he returned to Italy. He was for some time master of the *Incurabili* Conservatory at Venice. Afterwards we find him again at Vienna, old and indigent. In the year 1759, Haydn, yet an obscure young man struggling with poverty, got introduced into the family in

which he resided, in order to obtain the benefit of his instructions. "Haydn," says the writer already quoted, "who cared for nobody but the old Neapolitan, employed all sorts of devices to get into his good graces, and to obtain his harmonic favours. Every day he rose early, brushed the old man's coat, cleaned his shoes, and combed out his antique periwig, though he was as sour as can well be imagined. Haydn at first obtained nothing but the courteous salutation of *fool* or *blockhead* when he entered his room in a morning. But the bear, finding that he was served gratuitously, and observing, at the same time, the rare qualities of his voluntary, lackey allowed himself to soften now and then, and gave him some good advice." In this way Haydn learned the Italian method of singing, and the art of accompaniment on the harpsichord. In the latter part of his life Porpora retired to Naples, where he died in poverty, in 1767, at the age of eighty-two.

Porpora is described as a man of considerable wit and humour, of which, indeed, his joke of the trilled fugue is a proof. A smart saying is recorded of him by his biographers. Visiting a monastery in Germany, the monks requested him to be present at the service, in order that he might hear the organist. "Well," said the prior afterwards, "what do you think of our organist?" "Why," answered Porpora, "he is a clever man." "And a good charitable man, too," interrupted the prior; "his simplicity is really evangelical." "Oh," said Porpora, "as to his simplicity, I observed that; for his left hand knoweth not what his right hand doeth."

The compositions of Porpora consist of more than

fifty operas, and many cantatas, which remained long in favour. "The cantatas of Porpora," says Burney, "have always been much esteemed, on account of the excellence of their recitatives, and the good taste and truly vocal style of the airs. Perhaps the art is much more indebted to this master, for having polished and refined recitative and measured air, than for enriching it by the fertility of his invention."

One of the greatest masters of the Italian ecclesiastical school was DAVID PEREZ. He was of Spanish extraction, but born in 1711, at Naples, where he was educated in the Conservatory of *Santa Maria di Loreto*. He was celebrated as a composer for the theatre as well as the church, and produced many successful operas. Some of his pieces were got up at Lisbon in a style of splendour greatly surpassing the magnificence of our modern *spectacles*. It is related, that, when the new theatre of Lisbon was opened on the Queen's birth-day, in the year 1755, with *Perez's* opera of *Alessandro nelle Indie*, a troop of horse, and a Macedonian phalanx, appeared on the stage, and one of the king's riding-masters bestrode a beautiful horse, who represented Bucephalus, and pranced to a grand march composed expressly for him.

But, as has generally happened, Perez's operas are now forgotten, while his sacred music still survives. Mr. Novello, to whom the English public is indebted for a knowledge of the finest productions of the Italian ecclesiastical school, has, in his *Collection of Motets*, published some very fine compositions of this master. They are full of sublimity and grandeur, mingled with a delightful flow of pure Italian melody; they are not

remarkable for depth of learning, but their deficiencies in fugal counterpoint are compensated by their simplicity, breadth, and effect. Taken altogether, Perez must be ranked among the greatest masters of his time. Like Handel, he was corpulent and fond of the pleasures of the table, a propensity which is said to have shortened his life. Like Handel, too, he was blind in his latter days: but even when afflicted with this calamity, and when confined to his bed, he frequently, without the aid of an instrument, dictated compositions in parts to an amanuensis. He lived nearly thirty years in Portugal, where he was *maestro di capella* to the king; and died at Lisbon at the age of 67.

Adolfo Hasse, though a German by birth, is generally classed among Italian composers. He was born at Bergedorf, near Hamburgh, in 1699. At the age of twenty-five he went to Naples, where he received instructions from Porpora and Alessandro Scarlatti. His genius began to be noticed at Naples in 1725; and, during his long life, he produced an immense number of works, both for the church and the theatre. In 1732 he married the celebrated Faustina, and resided at Dresden and Vienna till 1775, when he retired to Venice, the place of Faustina's nativity. Both husband and wife died in 1783: the former at the age of eighty-four; the latter at the age of ninety. Dr. Burney, who visited Hasse at Vienna, in 1772,* gives a very pleasing account of the veteran composer and his family. Hasse's dramatic works, like all those of his time, are forgotten; but his sacred compositions, many

* *State of Music in Germany*, vol. i.

of which are still performed, justify the character given of him by Burney, who says that he was the most learned, natural, and elegant composer of his age. Some beautiful specimens of his style are to be found in Latrobe's Collection of Sacred Music.

Among the great Italian masters of the beginning of the eighteenth century may also be enumerated, LEONARDO LEO, FRANCESCO FEO, and LEONARDO VINCI, all of whom belonged to the school of Naples, and distinguished themselves by their ecclesiastical as well as dramatic compositions. To these names must be added that of NICOLO LOGROSCINO, a Neapolitan composer, who, though his works are now lost, deserves to be recorded as having given additional variety and effect to the music of the opera by the invention of those concerted pieces called *finales*.

The last of the composers who may be considered as belonging to this period, was GIOVANNI BATTISTA PERGOLESI, who was born in the neighbourhood of Naples, in 1704. He received the usual musical education of the time, but early showed a dislike to the intricacies of learned counterpoint, and a love of simple melody. After leaving the Conservatorio, or music-school, at which he had been placed, he received instructions from Vinci in vocal composition. His first productions were comic operas, one of which, the *Serva Padrona*, was in great favour throughout Italy, for many years. In 1735 he was engaged to compose the music of Metastasio's *Olimpiade*, for Rome, and produced a work of exquisite beauty. But by some strange caprice on the part of the Roman public, it was very coldly received; while another opera, by Duni, an inferior com-

poser, was applauded to the skies. Duni himself, who was a man of a candid and generous spirit, as well as a good musician, was ashamed of the treatment Pergolesi had received; and not only expressed his honest indignation in strong language, but exerted himself to promote the success of his rival's opera, though without effect; and Pergolesi, disappointed and mortified, returned to Naples. After some time, he turned his attention to sacred music, and was prevailed upon to compose a mass and vespers for a festival at Rome. These productions were heard with enthusiasm, and their reception was some consolation for his former treatment in that city. Whether, however, from infirmity of constitution, or from the effect of that treatment on his sensitive mind, his health rapidly declined, and he soon fell into a confirmed consumption. He retired to a small house at Torre del Greco, on the sea-side, where he lingered for a short time, and expired at the age of thirty-three. It was while in this retreat, and on the verge of the grave, that he composed those works which have especially contributed to render his name immortal:—the cantata of *Orfeo e Euridice*, the *Salve Regina*, and above all, the *Stabat Mater*, that divine emanation of an afflicted and purified spirit.

The death of Pergolesi excited throughout Italy deep sorrow; a feeling which at Rome was mingled with unavailing regret for the injustice which had been done him. The *Olimpiade* was again brought out with the utmost magnificence, and received with enthusiasm by the same public, who, two short years before, had listened to it with a coldness which withered the

young composer's hopes, and probably brought him to an untimely grave. This opera was first performed in England in 1742. It was received with much applause, and frequently repeated; but it was obliged to give way to the more powerful and energetic music, afterwards composed for the same drama, by Jomelli.

Pergolesi's sacred music is distinguished by the natural and expressive strain of its melody, and the simplicity of its construction. Everything in it has the appearance of the utmost ease, and yet it is that sort of ease which is the perfection of art, and is attained only by the highest genius. If the heavenly *Stabat Mater* has a fault, it is, perhaps, a certain degree of monotony, arising from the unvarying uniformity of the sentiment which pervades it. But this objection (if it is one,) belongs properly to the poetry, the expression of which is faithfully echoed by the music. Many beautiful pieces of Pergolesi's are found in modern collections, particularly that of Latrobe; and some of them are frequently heard at our performances of sacred music. If the opinion be correct, that musical elaboration has reached its height, and that there is a tendency to return to the simplicity of former times, one consequence of this tendency will be a revival of the popularity of Pergolesi.

CHAPTER X.

MUSIC IN ITALY DURING THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY, CONTINUED.—GALUPPI.—JOMELLI.—PICCINI.—SACCHINI.—PAESIELLO.—CIMAROSA.

THE composers of whom some account has now been given, were employed, nearly contemporaneously, in advancing the state of Italian music, towards the beginning of the last century. They were followed by another generation, whose labours were likewise nearly contemporaneous, among whom were Galuppi, Jomelli, Piccini, Sacchini, Guglielmi, Traetta, Terradellas, and others; and these, again, were succeeded by a third generation, which is distinguished by possessing the names of Paesiello and Cimarosa.

BALDESSARO GALUPPI was born in the year 1701, in the little island of Burano, near Venice, whence he has been distinguished by the name of *Buranello*. His two first operas were produced in 1722; and, during his life, which closed in 1785, he was a very fertile composer for the church, the theatre, and the chamber. Dr. Burney visited him at Venice in 1770, when he was as full of fire and genius as ever; "and he seems," adds the historian, "to have constantly kept pace with all the improvements and refinements of the times, and to have been as modern in his dramatic music, to the last year of his life, as ever." Some idea of this composer's style may be formed from the charming air, "How blest the maid," in the opera of *Love*

in a Village, an air, which, notwithstanding its great simplicity, is to the performer the most trying song in the piece. It must be sung after the manner of the old Italian school; the notes must be "with linked sweetness long drawn out," and the embellishments must be at once rich, chaste, and graceful. Hence, while we have sometimes heard this air received with a tumult of delight when given by a truly great singer, we have frequently observed it to pass unnoticed when sung by vocalists who, though possessed of voice and execution sufficient to win applause in a difficult bravura, have never been taught to achieve the still greater difficulty of singing a simple Italian melody.

The name of NICOLO JOMELLI is one of the most illustrious in musical history. This great man was born in 1714, at Aversa, a town near Naples, in which city he received his musical education under Leo and Durante. At three-and-twenty, he produced his first opera, *L'Errore Amoroso;* and, the following year, his *Odoardo*. By these works he gained so high a reputation, that he was invited to Rome and Bologna, which latter city he visited in 1741. On his arrival he waited on Padre Martini, and, without making himself known, begged to be admitted among the pupils of the venerable master. Martini gave him, as an exercise, the subject of a fugue; but he no sooner observed the manner in which his new pupil was working upon it than he exclaimed, "You are making game of me,—who are you? It is I that ought to be the scholar!" Jomelli, however, afterwards admitted that he had learned a great deal from this great contrapuntist. In 1749 he was at Rome, where, notwithstanding the

favour he had previously enjoyed, he seems to have given some umbrage to the public, which displayed itself so violently on the first night of his *Armida*, that he was obliged to make his escape from the theatre in the middle of the performance, and to leave Rome the same night. The feeling, however, was transient; for, within two years afterwards he returned, and was appointed chapel-master of St. Peter's. In the interval he had resided at Vienna, where his acquaintance with Metastasio commenced, and soon ripened into a friendship which ended only with Jomelli's life. He became the great poet's favourite composer, and set a number of his best operas. In Metastasio's letters, from this period, the character and genius of Jomelli are frequently mentioned in language of affectionate esteem and admiration*. In a letter from Metastasio to his friend and principal correspondent, Farinelli, written in 1749, the poet says, "Jomelli is about thirty-five years of age, of a spherical figure, pacific disposition, with an engaging countenance, most pleasing manners, and excellent morals. He has surprised me. I have found in him all the harmony of Hasse, with all the grace, expression, and invention of Vinci. If ever you should see him, you will be attached to him, as he is certainly the most amiable *gourmand* that ever existed."

Jomelli was soon induced to quit Rome, by an invitation from the duke of Wurtemburg to settle at his court. He resided at Stutgard for nearly twenty years, during which time he produced a prodigious number of

* These letters, many of which are given in Burney's *Life of Metastasio*, besides being delightful in other respects, are full of excellent poetical and musical criticism.

works for the church as well as the theatre. This long sojourn in Germany led him to make a considerable alteration in his style, and to adopt fuller harmonies and more elaborate vocal and instrumental combinations; a change, which, though it rendered his music agreeable to German ears, was by no means approved of by his own countrymen. Metastasio, whose long residence at Vienna appears, from many passages in his letters, to have had no effect in inspiring him with German opinions, remonstrated with Jomelli on the subject, in a letter written to him in 1765. "Ah, my dear Jomelli," says the poet, "do not abandon a faculty in which you have not, nor ever will have, a rival. In masterly airs there may be composers, perhaps, who by means of pains and labour will approach you; but in finding the road to the hearts of others, their own must be formed of fibres as delicate and sensitive as yours. It is true that, in writing in this new style, you cannot help sometimes expressing the passions in the way which your own happy temperament suggests. But as you are obliged, in order to support your learned idea, too frequently to interrupt the voice, the impressions already made on the mind of the hearer are effaced; and for the reputation of a great master, you neglect that of an amiable and most powerful musician." This language conveys, with great precision, an opinion frequently expressed with regard to the present German composers; of several of the greatest of whom it is said, with some justice, that though their native genius enables them to write with energy and expression, yet they are too often obliged, in order to support their learned ideas, to interrupt the voice, and

thus weaken or even efface the impression which it has already made. Nobody, however, will, now-a-days, concur in the justice of this censure, as applied to the music of Jomelli, which is only rendered the more satisfactory to modern ears for the very fault imputed to it by his countrymen in his own day.

Jomelli's adoption of the German style was disastrous to him after his return to Italy. His *Armida*, one of his most exquisite works, which he produced at Naples, in 1769, was successful; but his *Demofoonte*, in 1770, was coldly received; and his *Ifigenia in Aulide*, in 1771, experienced a total failure. This shock brought on a fit of apoplexy, from which the unfortunate composer never entirely recovered. A very short time before his death he composed his sublime and beautiful *Miserere*, the words of which are Mattei's Italian version of the fifty-first Psalm; a work to this day held in the highest admiration, and sufficient of itself to render his name immortal. He expired on the 28th of August, 1774, and received a public funeral of the most magnificent description.

Jomelli's unfortunate failure to please his countrymen at the end of his long and glorious career, has been made the subject of some excellent remarks by Dr. Burney. "On his return to Italy," he says, "Jomelli tried to thin and simplify his dramatic music, which, however, was still so much too operose for Italian ears, that in 1770, on my asking a Neapolitan how he liked the opera of *Demofoonte*, he cried out with vehemence, 'E scelerata, Signore!' Climate seems to operate so much on music, however its influence may be disputed in manners and government, that what is admired in

one country is detested in another. In cold climates, *labour* is necessary to circulation; in hot, *ease* is the grand desideratum. This principle is carried to such excess in Italy, that whatever gives the hearer of music the least trouble to disentangle is Gothic, pedantic, and *scelerata*. As to difficulties of execution *in a single part*, the composers and performers may spin their brains and burst their blood-vessels, and welcome, provided the texture of the parts is clear and simple. The Gothic inventions, as they call them, of fugues, canons, and laboured counterpoint of the sixteenth century, they are willing to resign to the Flemings, who first brought them into Italy; but of which all the natives, except a few obstinate pedants, struggled to divest their music, particularly that for the stage, during the last century. I entirely agree with Martial, that *turpe est difficiles habere nugas;* but that the art is to be enervated to the level of ignorance, idleness, and caprice, I deny. It is the *excess* of learning or facility, that is truly reprehensible by good taste and sound judgment; and *difficult* and *easy* are relative terms, which they only can define. To lovers of music, who have heard much in various styles, little is new; as to others who have heard but little, all is new. The former want research and new effects, which, to the latter, old music can furnish. Palates accustomed to plain food find *ragoûts* and *morceaux friands* too highly seasoned; while to those who have long been pampered with dainties, simplicity is insipid. How then is a composer or a performer to please a mixed audience, but by avoiding too much complacence to the exclusive taste of either

the learned or the ignorant, the supercilious or the simple?"

Nicolo Piccini was born at Bari, near Naples, in 1728. Showing an extraordinary love for music at a very early age, he was placed in the Conservatory of Santo Onophrio, at Naples, then under the superintendence of the celebrated Leo, and afterwards under that of Durante. After having gained considerable reputation by the composition of several operas, he brought out at Rome, in 1760, his master-piece, *La Buona Figliuola*, which was received with the most extravagant enthusiasm all over Italy. It was performed at every theatre, even the very smallest: the fashions of the day bore its name; shops and taverns took it as their sign; and its airs were sung and played by all sorts of people. Its popularity extended to France, Germany, and England, where it was long performed, both in its original shape, and in the languages of those countries. It owed its success not only to the excellence of the music, but of the drama, which is by Goldoni. In the music, Piccini has approached nearly to the operatic form of the present day. Each act terminates with a concerted piece of considerable length, and containing a variety of movements, during which the action of the piece is carried rapidly on, in the same manner, but not to the same extent, as in the operas of Mozart and Rossini. Piccini's next opera was the *Olimpiade* of Metastasio, which also had the most triumphant success. In this piece he effected a happy innovation, by breaking through the rule which made it necessary for every song to end with a "*da capo*," or a return to the first movement. Piccini

adopted the form of a slow movement, succeeded by a quick one, which became more and more rapid and impassioned to the very close, and terminated without any return to the original movement. Our modern composers do not observe the conventional rules of the older Italian school, either in regard to the arrangement or form of the different airs or pieces in an opera, but are governed by what they consider to be the best manner of producing effect and expressing the passions. Still, however, the form introduced by Piccini occurs much more frequently than any other; a proof that it is founded on sound dramatic principles.

After Piccini had been, for more than twenty years, the idol of Italy, during which time, as we are told by his biographer, M. Ginguéné, he had written a hundred and thirty-four operas, besides an immense number of oratorios, masses, cantatas, &c., he received an invitation to visit Paris, in order to compose for the French stage. He arrived at Paris in 1776. The works which he produced there, the memorable feud between his partisans and those of Gluck, and the effects of their writings on the national taste, belong to the history of French music. Piccini remained at Paris till the breaking out of the revolution, when he returned to Italy, after losing the greater part of his property. He arrived in Naples at the close of 1791, and was received with the utmost kindness by the king, who granted him a pension. But his prospects of comfort in his declining years were marred by his own conduct. "Having," says M. Ginguéné, "during the latter years of his residence at Paris, caught a portion of the revolutionary spirit of the times, he had the imprudence,

to call it by no harsher name, to profess those opinions loudly in the heart of Naples, and in the very ear of his sovereign, his patron, and friend. The consequence was, that he drew down upon himself misfortunes and persecution; and, being proscribed and placed under the surveillance of the police, he was obliged to remain above four years, shut up in his house, abandoned by his friends, and a prey to want and distress. During this time he found some consolation in setting several of the Psalms, in the admirable translation of his countryman, Saverio Mattei. These, at the same time, proved the means of his subsistence, being disposed of to different churches and monasteries, where the original scores are still preserved." In this unhappy situation he remained till 1798, when he found means to return to France, where, though he was received with honour and apparent enthusiasm, his just claims to solid marks of gratitude were resisted by the spirit of cabal, and his despondency, on account of the precarious state of his family, brought on an attack of paralysis. He recovered, however, from this affliction, and at last, in 1800, was appointed inspector of the Conservatory. But it was too late,—his frame was exhausted with disappointment and anxiety, and he expired on the 7th of May, 1800, at the age of seventy-two, leaving a widow and six children. His widow received from the government a pension of two thousand five hundred francs, about one hundred pounds sterling.

Piccini was possessed of a vigorous intellect and a highly cultivated mind. He had deeply studied the philosophy of his art; and his principles, though severe, were the result of sound and comprehensive views.

Many of his opinions have been preserved by his distinguished biographer; and, notwithstanding the changes which music has undergone since his day, they have lost none of their claims to attention and respect. He always wished to preserve the supremacy of the voice in dramatic music; and could not bear the overpowering accompaniments, incessant orchestral effects, crude masses of harmony, and eternal dissonances, which were coming into fashion in France. The following are some of his reflections. They appear to us invaluable.

"One soon learns," Piccini said, "all that can enter into harmony. It is not what may be admitted that it is difficult to learn, but what ought to be *omitted*. The four kinds of stringed instruments which form the basis of an orchestra, accommodate themselves equally to all sorts of expression. This is not the case with wind instruments and those of percussion. The oboe has an expression which does not belong to the clarinet; and it again has an expression different from that of the flute. The horns change their character according to the key in which they are employed. The bassoon, when not confounded with the bass, is sad and melancholy. The trombones have a mournful expression; the trumpets are warlike and brilliant. The deafening cymbal is entirely military; and I never hear it without expecting to see the march of a troop of cavalry. If the employment which nature herself assigns to these instruments were preserved, a variety of effects would be produced. But when they are all thrown in at once, and always used, they overpower and indurate the ear, and no longer present images to the mind, to which the ear is the passage. I should like to know

how composers will rouse the ear when it is once accustomed to all this uproar, which will soon happen. Of what new witchcraft will they then avail themselves? Perhaps they will then return to nature, and the legitimate means acknowledged by the art. We know what happens to palates dulled by the use of strong liquors. All that is necessary to produce these exaggerated effects may be learned in a short time; but it requires much time and study to produce genuine emotion." Equally judicious are his remarks on modulation. "To modulate," he said, "is not difficult in itself; there is a routine for that as for other mechanical arts. This is proved by those enharmonic modulations, which, to the ignorant appear the height of science, but are really the mere sport of scholars. To create melody from a given modulation,—to quit it only by the proper means,—to return to it without harshness or insipidity,—to make the change of modulation a just means of expression and of judicious variety,—these are the real difficulties of the art. But to quit a key almost as soon as we have entered it, to be extravagant without reason or object, to proceed by skips and jumps merely for the sake of change;—in short, to modulate for the sake of modulating, shows that the artist is ignorant of the principles and end of his art, and affects a superabundance of learning and imagination, in order to conceal the want of both the one and the other."

Antonio Sacchini was born at Naples in 1735. After having studied for several years under Durante, he betook himself to dramatic composition, and acquired great reputation by the numerous pieces which he wrote for the different theatres in Italy. In 1772 he came to

England, where he resided for many years, during which time he composed many pieces for the King's Theatre, which were performed with great success. His residence in this country, however, was unfortunate. "He remained," says Burney, "too long in England for his fame and fortune. The first was injured by cabals, and by what ought to have increased it, the number of his works; and the second by inactivity and want of economy. Upon a difference with Signor Rauzzini, this singer, from a fond friend, became his most implacable foe; declaring himself to be the author of the principal songs in all the late operas to which Sacchini had set his name, and threatening to make affidavit of it before a magistrate. The utmost I could ever believe of this accusation was, that during Sacchini's severe fits of the gout, when he was called upon for his operas before they were ready, he might have employed Rauzzini, as he and others had done Anfossi in Italy, to fill up the parts, set some of the recitatives, and perhaps compose a few of the flimsy airs for the under singers. The story, however, gained ground and was propagated by his enemies, though always disbelieved and contemned by his friends and the reasonable part of the public. In the summer of 1781 he went first to Paris, where he was almost adored; but after increasing his reputation there by new productions, he returned the following year to London, where he only augmented his debts and embarrassments; so that in 1782 he took a final leave of this country, and settled at Paris." During his residence in Paris, he composed several operas for the French stage, (particularly his celebrated *Œdipe à Colonne*,) which gained great popularity, and contributed

to the revolution in the state of music in that country, which the labours of foreign artists were then bringing about. But in Paris, as in London, he had enemies, whose intrigues injured the success of his works, and even rendered it difficult for him to get his *Œdipe*, the last and greatest of them, brought upon the stage. He was so disgusted with his residence in Paris, that he determined on returning once more to England, whither his patrons, after having paid his debts, had invited him. But death prevented the accomplishment of his design. The mortifications which he had suffered on account of *Œdipe* preyed on his sensitive disposition, and brought on an attack of the gout, of which he died in October, 1796, at the age of fifty-one.

Sacchini, though, while in England, he wrote entirely for the Italian stage, did a great deal to increase our taste for Italian melody; for his airs were so remarkable for their grace and simplicity, that some of them were introduced into our most popular operas, and are still known to the public in their English dress.

In concluding this sketch of the state of Italian music during the last century, we have now to notice two composers who stand in a different situation from those hitherto mentioned. Having continued to compose for the Italian stage down to a comparatively recent period, their works gradually assumed a more modern shape than those of any of the above composers; and some of their latest productions still hold a distinguished place in every Italian theatre in Europe. These masters are Paesiello and Cimarosa.

Giovanni Paesiello was born at Tarento in 1741,

and educated in the Conservatory of St. Onophrio, at Naples, under Durante. After acquiring great reputation in Italy, by a number of dramatic works, he went to Russia in 1776, and entered into the service of the Empress Catherine the Second, in which situation he continued for nine years. He then returned to Naples, where he remained till he was invited to Paris by the First Consul of France. At Paris several valuable appointments were offered him, but he declined them all except that of director of the chapel, for which he composed many pieces of sacred music. After residing between two and three years in France, he returned to Naples, where he died in 1816, full of years and honours.

Among the pieces of this composer which are still popular, we may mention *La Molinara*, *La Frascatana*, in which Madame Catalani, when she first came to England, enchanted the public by her graceful playfulness,—and *La Pazza per Amore*, in which Madame Pasta performs the character of *Nina* with such exquisite pathos. His *Barbiere di Seviglia* enjoyed unbounded popularity till it was superseded by the more brilliant work of Rossini. Many of Paesiello's airs have been introduced, with happy effect, into English operas. His style is remarkable for its extreme simplicity. His airs seem to be the natural and unpremeditated effusions of feeling, and in his accompaniments, though the notes are very few, yet every note is full of meaning.

Domenico Cimarosa was born at Naples in 1754. He studied music at the Conservatory of Loretto, under

Fenaroli, a pupil of Durante. His reputation as a dramatic composer spread with great rapidity, and was supported by a succession of works, which he continued to produce down to the period of his death, which took place at Venice in 1801, when he had completed his forty-sixth year. His master-piece, *Il Matrimonio Segreto*, was brought out at Vienna in 1792, and received with an admiration which remains unabated even at this day. The emperor, who was present at the first representation of this opera, was so transported with it, that he invited the whole performers to a banquet, and sent them back the same evening to the theatre, where they played it a second time.

When Naples was possessed by the French, Cimarosa imbibed the revolutionary spirit of the time, and made himself so conspicuous for his political opinions, that he was thrown into prison, and it is said that his death was occasioned by the severity of the treatment he received. On his liberation in 1800, he went to Venice, where he brought out his opera, *L'Imprudente Fortunata;* and had composed an act of another piece, *L'Artemisia*, when his progress was arrested by death: it was completed by some other composer, and brought on the stage at Venice; but the audience would not allow the performance to finish, and the curtain fell in the middle of the second act.

Cimarosa was a man of highly cultivated mind, and an amiable disposition. His reply to a painter, who wished to pay him a compliment by saying that he was superior to Mozart, exhibited wit as well as

modesty;—"I superior to Mozart, Sir!—what would you say to any man who should tell you that you were superior to Raphael?"

Cimarosa's music is remarkable for the charms of its melody, which, though less varied, and less indebted to the resources of modulation than that of Mozart, and less showy and *piquante* than that of Rossini, is unrivalled for the openness and flow of its long and exquisitely rounded periods. He possesses little of the melancholy which tinges Mozart's music even when it is meant to be gay; but he is able to express Italian passion in all its ardour; and, in his comic style, there is a quietness and delicacy which Rossini, with all his eccentricity and humour, has not attained. His concerted pieces are not so full of bustle and business as those of Rossini, but yet very dramatic, and admirably constructed. In the richness and fulness of his accompaniments, and in the delicate management of the different instruments, he excels any Italian writer of his time, though, in these respects, he is far surpassed by Mozart. The operose character of Mozart's accompaniments was long made an objection to his dramatic music. The Emperor Napoleon once inquired of the celebrated Gretry, what was the difference between Mozart and Cimarosa. "Sire," replied Gretry, "Cimarosa places the statue on the stage, and the pedestal in the orchestra; while Mozart puts the statue in the orchestra and the pedestal on the stage." This oft-repeated witticism only shows that Gretry partook of the general ignorance of the character of Mozart's music. To this day it is disliked by the singers of the Italian school, who find that the fulness of the

accompaniments restricts the use of florid embellishment, while their richness and beauty attract a portion of the attention which is claimed exclusively by the vocalist. But Mozart is the Titian of music; and the noble and graceful forms which he places upon the stage, are put in stronger and bolder relief by the glowing and delicately blended tints, and the powerful lights and shadows thrown over them by his orchestra. If, however, Cimarosa's pencil was dipped in fainter colours than that of Mozart, it was because his palette was not so richly spread as that of the German artist. The Italian composers were only beginning to discover those combinations of instruments which had long been familiar in Germany; and many of these discoveries were made by Cimarosa himself, who surpassed all his predecessors and contemporaries in the variety of his orchestral effects. The *Matrimonio Segreto* still holds a distinguished place on the stage. It is a light and elegant drama, founded on our comedy of "The Clandestine Marriage," and, when well performed, is one of the most delightful entertainments that can be imagined. Cimarosa's greatest serious opera is *Gli Orazi e Curiaci*, which is still frequently performed on the Continent, though not lately in England.

In concluding this sketch of the state of music in Italy in the eighteenth century, it may be proper to give some account of those seminaries called *Conservatorios* which have been frequently mentioned in the foregoing pages as having given musical education to the great Italian composers who filled Europe with their fame. There were schools of this description at Venice, Naples, Bologna, and other cities. The most

remarkable were those of Venice, for girls, and those of Naples, for boys. The *Conservatorio* of *Santa Maria di Loretto*, at Naples, was the most famous of the whole, and formed many of the greatest ornaments of the Neapolitan school.

Children were admitted into these conservatories from the age of eight to twenty; and received instructions in composition, singing, and playing on various instruments, according to the bent of their genius or disposition. If the children did not show sufficient talent to afford a promise of excellence, they were dismissed to make room for others. Each conservatory had two principal masters, one of whom taught composition and the other singing; and these masters were frequently the most eminent men of the age; Leo and Durante, for example, having been masters in the Conservatorio of *Santa Maria di Loretto*. There was also a master for each instrument. As the pupils were often very numerous, (the last-named seminary having generally contained two hundred), the method of instruction resembled a good deal that which is known by the name of the Lancasterian system. The master gave lessons to four or five of the most advanced scholars; each of these, having received his lesson, delivered it in his turn to four or five others of an inferior class; each of these, again, gave lessons to as many more, and thus the lessons were propagated through the whole school, and descended to the pupils of the lowest grade. These subordinate lessons were given under the general superintendence of the master, who was thus enabled to see that they were given and received without negligence or impropriety.

The pupils, at stated times, had public exercises, consisting of little oratorios, operas, and miscellaneous pieces of music, composed and executed by themselves. They also performed the musical service in the different churches: and the money gained in these various ways contributed to the revenues of the establishment. The pupils were dressed in uniform; and numbers of them not only studied, but practised, in the same room. Dr. Burney, in his *Musical Tour in Italy*, gives the following account of his visit, in 1770, to the Conservatorio of *Santo Onofrio*, at Naples, which presents a curious view of a mode of education, which, notwithstanding its unpromising aspect, formed a school of music possessing, in a supreme degree, those very qualities of elegance, delicacy, and refinement, which at first sight it might appear calculated to destroy.

"This morning," says Burney, "I went to the Conservatorio of St. Onofrio, and visited all the rooms where the boys practise, sleep, and eat. On the first flight of stairs was a trumpeter, screaming upon his instrument till he was ready to burst; on the second was a French horn, bellowing in the same manner. In the common practising room there was a *Dutch Concert*, consisting of seven or eight harpsichords, more than as many violins, and several voices, all peforming different things, and in different keys: other boys were writing in the same room; but, it being holiday-time, many were absent who usually study and practise in this room. The jumbling them altogether in this manner may be convenient for the house, and may teach the boys to attend to their own parts with firmness, whatever else may be going forward at the same

time; it may likewise give them force by obliging them to play loud in order to hear themselves. But in the midst of such jargon and continued dissonance, it is wholly impossible to give any kind of polish or finishing to their performance: hence the slovenly coarseness so remarkable in their public exhibitions; and the total want of taste, neatness, and expression in all these young musicians, till they have acquired these accomplishments elsewhere.

"The beds, which are in the same room, serve for seats to the harpsichords and other instruments. Out of thirty or forty boys who were practising, I could discover but two playing the same piece; some of those who were practising on the violin seemed to have a great deal of hand. The violoncellos practise in another room; and the flutes, hautbois, and other wind instruments, in a third, except the trumpets and horns, which are obliged to fag, either on the stairs or on the top of the house.

"The only vacation in these schools, in the whole year, is in autumn, and that for a few days only. During the winter the boys rise two hours before it is light, from which time they continue their exercise, an hour and a-half at dinner excepted, till eight o'clock at night; and this constant perseverance for a number of years, with genius and good teaching, must produce great musicians."

There were three conservatories for boys at Naples. Those of Venice, for girls, were four in number, and conducted upon a similar plan. They were maintained at the expense of the wealthy amateurs of the city. The girls, it is said, were strictly brought up, and

generally remained in the school till their marriage. Strangers who visited these conservatories, were struck with the singularity of young women, at their concerts, playing upon all kinds of instruments, even the horn, the bassoon, and the double-bass.

Such was the state of these celebrated Italian schools, till the old state of things was put an end to by the power of Napoleon. During the decline of music which has since taken place in Italy, most of the conservatorios have disappeared, and those which still exist have dwindled into comparative insignificance.

CHAPTER XI.

MUSIC IN GERMANY IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.—MATTHESON.—THE FAMILY OF BACH.—GRAUN.—F. AND G. BENDA.—STAMITZ.—VANHALL.—FREDERICK THE SECOND.—GLUCK.

Among the German musicians of the eighteenth century—and, indeed, among the musicians of every age and country—the highest place is due to Handel. But, as this illustrious composer came to England at the age of twenty-six, and spent the remainder of his long and active life in this country, his name belongs to the history of English music; and we have, therefore, had occasion to speak of his life and works in a previous chapter.

Johann Mattheson, the friend and rival of Handel in his early days, was born at Hamburgh in 1681. He was a profound musician, and enjoyed a high reputation in his day; but his works are now entirely forgotten. He died in 1764. He appears to have been deeply tinged with the pedantry of his age; and his compositions are said to have been filled with those conceits, then so common, of which music has been cleared by the progress of taste. We are told by his biographers, that, late in life, in setting, as part of his own funeral anthem, the third verse of the fourth chapter of Revelations, "And there was a rainbow round about the throne," he contrived, in a very full score, to make every part form an arch, by a gradual ascent and descent of the notes on paper; which appearance, to the *eyes* of the performers, he seems to have thought,

would convey the idea of a rainbow to the *ears* of the congregation. It is curious to observe how difficult it is for the greatest judgment and taste to withstand the influence of authority and example. Even Handel himself, accustomed to see such absurdities in the great models of his day, could not help sometimes imitating them; and a few conceits, hardly less puerile than the above, are to be found in his most sublime productions.

JOHN SEBASTIAN BACH was born at Eisenach in the year 1685. He was descended of a family in which musical genius had, for many generations, been hereditary; and he may be said to have transmitted it to his descendants: so that the name of Bach is one of the most illustrious in the history of music. The founder (as he may be termed,) of this great family, was Veit Bach. He was a baker at Presburg, in Hungary; but, being driven from that country by the religious disturbances in the sixteenth century, he removed, with the remnant of his property, into Thuringia, and resumed his trade in a village in the neighbourhood of Saxe Gotha. In his leisure hours he amused himself with his guitar, and communicated his musical inclination to his two sons. They did the same to their children; till by degrees there arose a very numerous family, all the branches of which appear to have made music their chief employment, and to have obtained among them most of the offices of organists, cantors*, and town-

* "In most parts of Germany, where the Protestant religion is established, each parish has a cantor to teach singing, and to direct the chorus. Though *cantor* is a general appellation for a singer, it is in a particular manner applied, in this country, to the person who has the direction of singing the psalms and hymns

musicians, in Thuringia. Some of these ancestors of John Sebastian Bach were men of eminent talents, and might have obtained both fame and fortune if they had been inclined to leave their native province. But they partook of the quiet, frugal, and contented disposition of the people among whom they lived; deriving their greatest pleasures from the practice of their art, and satisfied with the moderate competence which it procured them. The branches of this family, even when they had become numerous and scattered, were united by those ties of kindred which are observed to be so peculiarly strong among the Germans. It was their custom, every year, to assemble at some convenient place, and to spend a few days together in affectionate intercourse. Their amusements, on these occasions,

in parish churches. He is precentor, or leader of the psalm, which he likewise ends by singing the last word of every line; so that he may be called the *alpha* and *omega* of sacred song. The cantor, who is likewise frequently schoolmaster, besides having a good voice, should necessarily understand counterpoint; if not in a high degree, at least sufficiently to correct such errors as may have crept into compositions through the ignorance or carelessness of transcribers. He should likewise be able to make an accurate score, and from the score to figure the bass, in such a manner as to include all accidents of modulation. 'Without these qualifications,' says M. Walther in his Musical Lexicon, 'as a German organist is not gifted with universal knowledge, no perfect harmony can be hoped for.'

"In the market-towns and villages of Thuringia, in Saxony, where two persons are usually employed in a school, he who directs the music in the choir, or leads the psalm or chorus, is called *rector*, or schoolmaster, and the organist is commonly *cantor*."

Burney's State of Music in Germany.

were entirely musical. As their offices were all connected with the church, and belonged to a community among whom piety was more habitual than it has become in later times, they used to begin their pastimes by singing a hymn in chorus, Among their amusements was one called a "quodlibet," which consisted of extempore songs, of a ludicrous, and sometimes not very refined character, sung by all the company; each person singing different words, but in such a manner that the several songs made a sort of harmony together, and much laughter was caused by the quaint conceits and cross-purposes thus produced. This appears to have been an ancient and favourite German amusement; Forkel says that he had a printed collection of quodlibets published at Vienna in 1542.

The father of John Sebastian Bach was John Ambrosius Bach, court and town musician at Eisenach. He had a brother, who held the same office at Arnstadt, and was so very like him, that even their wives could not distinguish them except by their dress. They were much attached to each other, and similar in voice, disposition, habits, and even in the style of their music. If one was ill, the other (it is said) fell sick also; and they died nearly at the same time.

John Sebastian lost his father when he was not quite ten years old; his mother had died some time before. He was thus left to the care of his elder brother, who was an organist, and from whom he received his first instructions in music. But he outran the pace at which his brother wished to proceed, and finding the lessons laid before him too easy, he used to importune his teacher to furnish him with pieces of greater

difficulty. He had observed that his brother had a book containing pieces for the clavichord by the most celebrated composers of the day, and earnestly begged permission to make use of it, which was constantly refused. At last, he found means to get possession of it secretly. It was kept in a cupboard which had a door of lattice-work, through the interstices of which he could pass his little hand, and, by rolling it up, could withdraw and replace it. He set about copying it by night; and, having no candle, was obliged to work by moonlight. He took six months to finish his laborious task; but, just as he had completed his copy, his brother found it out, and cruelly took it from him; and it was not till his brother's death, which took place some time afterwards, that he recovered his treasure.

Being left destitute by the death of his brother, he went to Lüneburg, and was engaged as a treble singer, in a choir at that place, and contrived, at the same time, to improve himself as a performer on the clavichord and organ. In 1703, when he was eighteen, he became court musician at Weimar; and, in the following year, exchanged this situation for that of organist at Arnstadt. Here he began to study most zealously all the works of the great organists of that day which he was able to procure; and even travelled on foot to Lubeck to hear Buxtehude, a famous organist of that town. His talents now began to attract attention; and in 1708, he was appointed court organist to the duke of Weimar. In this situation he cultivated his powers by such unwearied diligence, that, by the time he was thirty years of age, he had become the greatest organist of his day. In 1717, Marchand, the celebrated

French organist, who had the reputation of being unrivalled, visited Dresden, where he performed before the king, and obtained such approbation that a large salary was offered him if he would engage in his majesty's service. Marchand was immeasurably inferior to Bach; and this was well known to Volumier, at that time director of the Dresden concerts; who, wishing to give the young German artist an opportunity of showing his superiority, obtained the king's permission to invite him to a musical contest with the Frenchman. On Bach's arrival at Dresden, Volumier procured him an opportunity of secretly hearing Marchand. He was not discouraged; but sent Marchand a polite invitation to a trial of skill; offering to play on the spot whatever Marchand should lay before him, and requesting from him a similar compliance. Marchand accepted the challenge; and, with the king's consent, a time and place were fixed for the contest. A large company of the most distinguished people in Dresden assembled; and Bach was at his post, but Marchand did not appear. After waiting a long time, the company were informed, to their great surprise, that Marchand had, that morning, "taken French leave" of Dresden. Bach, therefore, had to walk over the course; and played to the admiration of the assembly. "Bach received on this occasion," says Forkel, his biographer, "praise in abundance; but it is said that he did not receive a present of one hundred Louis d'ors which the king had designed for him*."

* Burney, in his *Present State of Music in Germany*, (vol. ii. p. 82,) says that this contest actually took place, and that Bach, "like another David, vanquished this Goliah." But the above account is undoubtedly the correct one.

Soon after this occurrence, Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cothen, a great judge and lover of music, invited him to take the office of his *maestro di capella;* an office which he held about six years. In the year 1723, he was appointed director of music, and cantor to Saint Thomas's school at Leipsic, which situation he held during the remainder of his life.

In 1740 his second son, the celebrated Charles Philip Emanuel, entered the service of Frederick the Second of Prussia. That prince, who, besides being a statesman and a warrior, was a musical *virtuoso* of the first class, had heard so much of the transcendant powers of John Sebastian Bach, that he frequently expressed to Charles Philip, a wish to see his father. These expressions were frequently repeated to the father by his son; and John Sebastian was at length induced, in 1747, to pay a visit to Berlin. At this time the king had a private concert every evening, at which he himself performed on the flute. One evening, as he was getting his flute ready, and his musicians were assembled, an officer brought him a list of the strangers who were arrived. He ran over the list; and turning to the company, said, with a kind of agitation, "Gentlemen, old Bach is come." The flute was laid aside; and Bach, who had alighted at his son's lodgings, was immediately sent for and introduced to the king, who did not even give him time to change his travelling dress for a chanter's black gown, according to the etiquette of the time. The king gave up his concert for the evening, and invited Bach to try his piano-fortes, made by Silbermann, which stood in several rooms of the palace. The musician went with him from room to room; and he was invited to extem-

porise on the various instruments. After he had gone on for some time, he requested the king to give him a subject for a fugue, which he treated with his usual genius and learning. The king then expressed a wish to hear a fugue in six parts; but, as it is not every subject that is fitted for such full harmony, Bach chose one himself, and executed it to the astonishment of his auditors. The king being desirous to hear his performance on the organ, he was next day taken to all the organs in Potsdam as he had been to Silbermann's piano-fortes. After his return to Leipsic, he worked up the subject which the king had given him into a regular composition of great depth and learning, and had it published, under the title of "Musicalisches Opfer," (Musical Offering,) and dedicated to the inventor of the subject.

Soon after this time his sight began to fail, in consequence of the unremitting industry with which he had for so many years devoted his days and nights to the study of his art. He was at length seized with a painful disorder in his eyes; and, having twice submitted to an unsuccessful operation, he became entirely blind. His constitution, which had been uncommonly vigorous, also gave way; and he died on the 30th of July, 1750, in the 66th year of his age.

Bach was twice married. By his first wife he had seven, and by his second wife thirteen children; of whom eleven were sons, and nine daughters. Four of his sons, whom we shall afterwards mention, became musicians of great eminence. He did not make a great fortune, or gain during his lifetime that extensive celebrity which was due to his exalted merit. He had,

indeed, a respectable office with a good income; but he had a very numerous family to support and educate. He neither had, nor sought any other resources. His compositions were of too profound and elevated a character, to be popular, or to be a source of profit when published; and he was too single-minded, too much occupied with his art, to court the patronage of the great. Had he, like many other great musicians, chosen to travel, his wonderful genius and attainments would have been the admiration of all Europe. By such means he might have gained greater riches and immediate fame, but not greater happiness than he possessed. He enjoyed what he loved, a tranquil life in the bosom of his affectionate family, a competency, and the respect and attachment of all who knew him.

A remarkable feature in the character of this great man was, his uncommon modesty. When he was sometimes asked how he had made himself so great a master of his art, he generally answered, "I was obliged to be industrious; whoever works as hard will succeed as well." He was kind and liberal in his treatment of other artists, and in his opinions respecting them. Every lover of the art, whether a foreigner or a native, who visited him, was sure of a friendly and hospitable reception; and he was never known to speak harshly or contemptuously of any compositions, however trifling or inconsiderable they may have appeared to one so conversant as he was with the highest attributes of the art.

Many absurd stories have been told of his going into churches, dressed like a village school-master, or in some such disguise, in order to enjoy the amazement of

the organist at his stupendous powers, and produce exclamations that he was either Sebastian Bach or the devil, and so forth. But these are mere fables; and he himself always denied that he had ever done anything of the kind. He was fond of hearing the music of other composers, and hearty in his applause when it was merited. He had the greatest esteem for Handel, and often wished to be personally acquainted with him. After Handel had settled in London, he thrice visited Halle, his native town. During the first and second visit, these two great men desired to see each other; but accidents prevented their meeting; and Handel's last visit was after Bach's death. "Thus," says Forkel, "his wish to be personally acquainted with Handel was not fulfilled, any more than that of many lovers of music, who would have been glad to see and hear him and Handel together." A cordial meeting and a friendly contest between these great champions of the age, "nought in hate, but all in honour," would indeed have been something to see, and hear, and remember for a lifetime.

Sebastian Bach was pre-eminent, not only as a composer, but as a performer on keyed instruments. His works consist, partly of pieces for the clavichord, harpsichord, and organ; and partly of vocal music, entirely of a sacred character.

His instrumental compositions are very numerous. The following are those which are best known and most esteemed: *The well tempered Clavier*, (Clavichord or Harpsichord,) in two parts, each of which contains twenty-four preludes and fugues in all the keys. This work has been long known in England; and is used as a manual by every musician who wishes to be a good

contrapuntist, or to acquire a sound and solid style of performance on the piano-forte. Several books of *Suites*, for the clavichord or harpsichord: a *Suite* in those days, was a name for a piece, consisting of a prelude, and a succession of movements, generally in the measures, and bearing the names, of different dances, such as allemandes, courantes, sarabands, jigs, &c., the whole forming a connected series or sonata. We have similar suites by Handel, Domenico Scarlatti, and other old masters. Grand preludes and fugues for the organ, with an obligato pedal part: an English edition of these has been lately published, so arranged that they can be performed on the piano-forte, and the pedal part has been adapted to the violoncello or contra-basso, by Mr. Dragonetti. In this form they make beautiful duets for the piano-forte and violoncello or double-bass; and have been thus performed with great effect in public. *The art of Fugue;* in which the author exhibits this art in its full extent, by showing the variety of fugal treatment which can be given to a single theme. The theme has twenty-three variations; every variation being a complete fugue in itself. The last fugue but one is upon the original theme, with two additional subjects, the notes of one of which are the letters of the author's name, B, A, C, H.* This work was interrupted by the disorder in his eyes, and, as he never recovered, it was left unfinished. He added to it, however, a fine *chorale*, or four-part hymn, which he dictated to his son-in-law a few days before his death, and which is in an affecting strain of devout and pious

* H, in Germany, designates the note which we call B *natural*, the letter B being confined to B *flat*.

resignation. Bach also composed six solos for the violin, and the same number for the violoncello, without any accompaniment. These solos were considered, for a long series of years, as the best means of making a pupil master of his instrument; and to this day may be studied with great advantage for the purpose of gaining a knowledge of the fingerboard.

His vocal works consist of five *Passioni*, or services for Passion week; many oratorios, masses, motets, and other compositions for the church. All his musical conceptions were grand, lofty, and profound; and hence, notwithstanding the cheerfulness and sociability of his temper, he never cultivated the inferior departments of the art, or employed it for the purposes of social amusement. Forkel, his biographer, says he never composed a song; and adds, in a very congenial spirit, "For this, however, he was not wanted. These pleasing little flowers of art will never become extinct: nature herself produces them, even without particular pains being bestowed on their cultivation." From the same spirit there was a kind of good-humoured contempt mingled with his liking for the music of the theatre. When Hasse was musical director at Dresden, he and his wife, the celebrated Faustina, used to visit Bach at Leipsic, and he, in return, used to go to Dresden, to repay their visits and hear the opera. He generally took his eldest son with him, and used to say to him, "Come, William, shall we go again and hear the pretty Dresden songs?" But this joke, innocent as it was, he would not have uttered, (as his biographer observes) to any body except this son, who already knew what was great in art, and what was only beautiful and agreeable.

Dr. Burney has formed an erroneous estimate of the character of Sebastian Bach as a composer. After quoting the opinion of Marpurg, that he was many great musicians in one,—profound in science, fertile in fancy, and in taste easy and natural—the doctor adds: "To this part of the encomium many are unwilling to assent; as this truly great man seems, by his works for the organ, of which I am in possession of the chief part, to have been constantly in search of what was new and difficult, *without the least attention to nature and facility.* He was so fond of full harmony, that, besides a constant and active use of the pedals, he is said to have put down such keys by a stick in his mouth, as neither hands nor feet could reach." In another place Dr. Burney expresses himself thus: "If Sebastian Bach and his admirable son Emanuel, instead of being musical directors in commercial cities, had been fortunately employed to compose for the stage and public of great capitals, such as Naples, Paris, or London, and for performers of the first class, *they would doubtless have simplified their style more to the level of their judges;* the one would have sacrificed all unmeaning art and contrivance, and the other have been less fantastical and *recherché;* and both, by writing in a style more popular, and generally more intelligible and pleasing, would have extended their fame, and been indisputably the greatest musicians of the present century."

Burney lived and wrote when musical taste was at a low ebb in England; and, notwithstanding his many and great merits, he betrays, in many parts of his writings, an undue predilection for the fashionable

style of his day. The compositions for keyed instruments then in vogue in this country were shallow and trifling; and though Clementi had appeared, yet he had not yet given the English public a notion of that profound and brilliant style, for which his powerful genius was indebted to the study of the Bachs and Scarlattis, the great masters of Germany and Italy. To a public accustomed to the music of Sterkel, Schroeter, Hullmandel, &c., consisting of slight and trivial melody, and thin and common harmony, the depth and originality of Sebastian Bach must have appeared void of "nature and facility," and Burney was always disposed to go along with the public.* Hence his regret that Sebastian Bach and his son had not conformed to the prevailing taste of a great capital, and simplified their style more to the level of their hearers. The lofty and independent mind of Sebastian Bach would doubtless have followed its own bent, wherever he had fixed his residence; but had he been induced to act in conformity with Dr. Burney's wishes, how great would have been the misfortune! Had he simplified his style to the level of his hearers—had he endeavoured to write in a popular manner, and to make himself generally intelligible and pleasing, he might have been a very delightful and favourite composer for the time; but would he have left a body of works, which, instead of having sunk into oblivion, are acquiring greater and greater celebrity at the distance of a century?

* Burney, it been said, has retracted his opinion of Sebastian Bach, admitting it to have been founded on an imperfect knowledge of his works.

Dr. Forkel understood this matter better than Dr. Burney seems to have done. "It is not a quality," he says, "but rather a consequence of its qualities, that Bach's melody never grows old. It remains 'ever fair and young,' like Nature, from which it is derived. Everything that Bach mingled in his earlier works, conformably to the prevailing taste of his time, is now antiquated; but where, as in his later works, he has drawn his melodies from the internal sources of the art itself, without any regard to the dictates of fashion, all is as fresh and as new as if it had been produced but yesterday. There are but very few compositions, equally old, of which anything similar can be said. Even the works of such ingenious composers as, for instance, Reinhard, Kaiser, and Handel, have become antiquated sooner than might have been expected, and probably than the authors themselves believed. As composers for the public in general, they were obliged to yield to the prevailing taste; and works of this kind last no longer than this taste. But nothing is more inconstant and changeable than every description of popular taste, and in general whatever is called fashion. Of Handel it is, however, remarkable, that his fugues are not yet antiquated, whereas but few of his airs probably would be found to please the ear *."

As a fugue writer, Sebastian Bach is unrivalled. "In fugues of the ordinary kind," says Forkel, "there is nothing but a certain, very insignificant routine. Com-

* This last remark, in reference to Handel, requires some qualification. *Many* of his airs retain their original freshness and beauty; but these airs bear no marks of the fashion of his day.

posers take a theme, give it a companion, transpose both gradually into the keys related to the original one, and make the other parts accompany them in all these transpositions with a kind of thorough-bass chords. This is a fugue, but of what kind? It is very natural that a person acquainted with such fugues only can have no great opinion of the whole species. But Bach's fugue is of another kind; it fulfils all the conditions which we are accustomed to demand even from the more free species of composition. A highly characteristic theme, an uninterrupted principal melody, wholly derived from it, and equally characteristic from the beginning to the end; not mere accompaniment in the other parts, but in each of them an independent melody, in accordance with the others also from the beginning to the end; freedom, lightness, and fluency in the progress of the whole; inexhaustible variety of modulation combined with perfect purity; the exclusion of every arbitrary note; unity and diversity in the style, rhythm, and measure; and lastly, a life diffused through the whole, so that it sometimes appears to the performer or hearer as if every single note were animated; these are the properties of Bach's fugue—properties which excite admiration and astonishment in every judge who knows what a mass of intellectual energy is required for the production of such works. Must not then, such a work, in which all is united that is found separate in other kinds of composition according to their various destinations, deserve especial admiration? I must say still more. All Bach's fugues, composed in the years of his maturity, have the abovementioned properties in common; they are all endowed

with equally great excellencies, but each in a different manner. Each has its own defined character; and, dependent upon that, its own turns in melody and harmony. When we know and can perform *one*, we really know only *one*, and can perform but *one;* whereas we know and can perform whole folios full of fugues by other composers of Bach's times, as soon as we have comprehended and rendered familiar to our hand, the turns of a single one.

"To such properties and excellencies," continues this able critic, "do the arts of counterpoint lead when they are well employed; that is to say, as Bach employed them. Through them he learned to develop, from a given theme, a whole series of resembling, yet different melodies, in every kind of taste, and every variety of figure; through them he learned not merely to begin well, but also to continue and to end well; through them he acquired such a command of harmony, and its infinite transpositions, that he could reverse whole pieces, note by note, in all the parts, without in the least impairing the flow in the melody or the purity of the harmony; through them he learned to make the most artificial canons, in all intervals and all kinds of movement, so light and flowing, that nothing is to be perceived of the art employed in them, and they sound entirely like free compositions; through them, finally, he was enabled to leave to posterity a great number of works of the most various kinds, which are all models of art, and will remain so till the art itself shall be no more."

Sebastian Bach's works for the church are of the highest excellence. His oratorios, in particular, though

too little known in this country, are justly looked upon by the best Continental critics, as superior to those of every other composer except Handel. His chorusses are indescribably grand and magnificent; and his airs full of expression. But all is grave and elevated, and calculated to inspire deep religious feeling. This is the pure ecclesiastical style, unmingled with the light and florid graces of the theatre. It is by blending two incongruous styles, that the sacred music of the more modern schools both in Italy and Germany has lost its religious character. Even in the masses of Haydn and Mozart, movements constantly occur, so airy, and so much in the theatrical style, that they would require only a change of words to be perfectly suited to a comic opera. These levities, indeed, are mixed with graver matter, but this only gives a motley character to the music; and these "*seria mista jocis*" are not fitted to generate and sustain that uniform solemnity of mind which should pervade a religious audience. As to the modern compositions which are called oratorios, they often exhibit a similar disregard of the true ecclesiastical style; and, even in the best and greatest of them, we find the most magnificent choral fugues mingled with the light strains of the theatre and the chamber. On this account, some high musical authorities do not place these compositions in the class of oratorios. "In the cantata," says Choron, "the Germans have some extremely beautiful works; at the head of which we may name the cantatas of the *Creation* and *Seasons*, by Haydn, which are by some erroneously called oratorios." The *Mount of Olives*, by Beethoven, is of a similar description. Some parts of this beautiful work,

indeed, are so essentially dramatic, that it is only by means of theatrical action that their effect could be clearly made out. Of this nature is the scene in which the Roman soldiers are represented as searching for and seizing our Saviour; where a gloomy military march is blended with the fierce cries of the soldiers, and the wailing of the disciples: and, indeed, throughout the whole piece, few of the movements are written in the style which belongs to the oratorio.

Notwithstanding the exquisite beauties of these modern works, there can be no doubt that the theatrical lightness of many parts of them has made the great and solemn oratorios of the older masters appear comparatively dry and heavy. The unapproachable grandeur of the *Messiah* secures it from oblivion or mutilation. But, of the other oratorios of Handel, some are wholly laid aside, and fragments of the rest contribute to make up those incongruous jumbles, called "Selections," of which our performances of sacred music generally consist. In Germany, however, the case is different. At the great festivals which take place in that country, the oratorios of Sebastian Bach, Graun, and other composers of the old school, are constantly heard, and oratorios of Handel are performed entire, of which only a few scraps are now produced in England. The pure ecclesiastical style ought to be kept separate and distinct from every other. The music which we hear in our churches ought to resemble those holy edifices themselves, in massive simplicity of proportions, and solemnity of character. It ought to be free from the florid graces of the opera, in the same manner as the walls in which it is heard, ought to exhibit none of the

gilded ornaments of the theatre. When we now enter our churches on those occasions when the music of the church can be invested with the greatest majesty, we go in the expectation of being gratified with light airs and dramatic effects. But, were we not led, by a vicious practice, to expect such things, the want of them would not disappoint us. It is by a reform in this respect,—by performing all the oratorios of Handel, and by introducing, in an English dress, the sublime works of Sebastian Bach and of his countrymen who have worthily followed in his footsteps,—that the general taste for ecclesiastical music in this country would be purified and exalted. The greatest German composers of sacred music, at the present day, are returning to the severe and lofty style of the old school, of which the chief models are found in the works of Handel and Sebastian Bach.

Four of the sons of Sebastian Bach, were distinguished musicians. Carl Philip Emanuel Bach, his second son, born in 1714, was for many years director of music at Hamburgh, where he died in 1788. The reputation of Emanuel Bach is little inferior to that of his illustrious father. His music for the church is still highly esteemed, and frequently performed in Germany. His compositions for the harpsichord, till the appearance of those of Haydn, were quite unrivalled. They were marked by a vocal flow of melody, and a boldness of harmony and modulation, previously unexampled in music of this nature. Haydn evidently formed his style on that of Emanuel Bach: one cannot hear, for the first time, a harpsichord piece of Bach's, without imagining it to be one

of the early compositions of Haydn. Bach was a learned and profound musician, but despised the pedantry of the art; and, both by precept and example, contributed to emancipate music from many of its Gothic trammels. In a conversation with Dr. Burney*, in 1772, "he spoke irreverently of *canons*, which he said were dry and despicable pieces of pedantry, that any one might compose who would sacrifice his time to them; but it was ever a certain proof to him of a total want of genius in any one that was fond of such wretched studies and unmeaning productions." This remark, coming from such a quarter, is well worth consideration; but it must be understood as directed against the abuse of a species of composition, which every student will find a valuable exercise, and which has introduced many beauties into harmony.

JOHN CHRISTIAN BACH, another son of Sebastian, resided chiefly in London, where he died in 1782. He was a very popular composer of operas, songs, and pieces for the harpsichord. Sebastian's other sons, Wilhelm Friedemann, and John Christopher, were both eminent, the one as an organist, and the other as a composer and performer on the harpsichord.

The most celebrated contemporary of Sebastian Bach, was CARL HEINRICH GRAUN, whom Burney calls "the idol of the Berlin School." He was born in Saxony in 1701, and educated at Dresden. He entered into the service of Frederick the second (then prince of Prussia) in 1735, and resided at Berlin till his death, in 1759. He composed many oratorios and other pieces for the church, which are, perhaps, better

* *State of Music in Germany*, vol. ii. p. 252.

known in England than any other foreign sacred music of that period. Of his celebrated oratorio, *Der Tod Jesu*, (The Death of Jesus), some portions are inserted in Latrobe's well-known selection of sacred music; and some of his pieces are given in Dr. Crotch's specimens. Detached movements from this composer's oratorios are performed at our festivals; but *The Death of Jesus* ought to be brought, in its entire shape, before the British public.

The two brothers, FRANCIS and GEORGE BENDA, also belong to this period. Francis Benda was for many years concert-master to the king of Prussia, and died at Berlin, in 1786. He was at first a singer; but, losing his voice, betook himself to the study of the violin, and became the founder of the German school of violin-playing. His style was eminently original. "It is not," says Burney, "that of Tartini, Somis, Veracini, nor that of the head of any one school, or musical seat, of which I have the least knowledge; it is *his own*, and formed by that model which should be ever studied by all instrumental performers, *good singing*."

George Benda, who was, for many years in the service of the court of Gotha, was a masterly composer for the harpsichord, in the style of Emanuel Bach, and the author of much dramatic music which was highly esteemed.

About the middle of the eighteenth century began those improvements in the composition of orchestral instrumental music which laid the foundation for the present unrivalled school of Germany. Hitherto the music of this description had consisted chiefly of the concerto, in which there was a leading part for a single

violin, accompanied by the band, in four parts of stringed instruments only. Francis Benda and J. STAMITZ added several wind instruments to the band, and thus formed the rudiments of the modern symphony. This species of composition was further improved by VANHALL, a Viennese musician, of whom Burney, in his German Tour, gives an interesting account. He was then a young man of a flighty and eccentric character, and living so obscurely, that the doctor could hardly find out the garret which he inhabited. He afterwards, however, acquired the utmost popularity; and his symphonies, quartets, and other instrumental pieces, were in great vogue all over Europe, till they were superseded by those of Haydn. Within our memory the music of Vanhall was in constant use at our theatres, concerts, and musical parties.

FREDERICK THE SECOND, king of Prussia, deserves a place in the musical, as well as the political, history of the eighteenth century; for he not only patronised music, but was himself a proficient in the art. His establishment included several of the greatest musicians of the time; and he was a masterly performer on the flute, and a composer for that instrument. In his youth, this prince was barbarously treated by his father, Frederick William, a brutal tyrant, who studied to prevent his son from following any liberal pursuit, or acquiring any elegant accomplishment. In particular, he not only prohibited him from studying or practising music, but even from hearing it. The queen, however, encouraged the prince in his favourite amusement, and engaged musicians for his service. But this was done by stealth; for had the old king discovered that he

was disobeyed, the consequences might have been fatal to the musicians, if not to the prince himself. He used to meet his band under the pretence of going a hunting, and to have his concerts in a cavern, or in the middle of a wood.

When Dr. Burney visited Berlin in 1772, the king was in the height of his musical pursuits, respecting which we shall quote some of the most curious of Burney's details*.

"The king being at the whole expense of the opera, the entrance is *gratis;* so that any one who is decently dressed may have admission into the pit. The performance begins at six o'clock; the king, with the princes, and his attendants, are placed in the pit, close to the orchestra; the queen, the princesses, and other ladies of distinction, sit in the front boxes. Her majesty is saluted at her entrance into the theatre, and at her departure thence, by two bands of trumpets and kettle-drums, placed on each side of the house, in the upper row of boxes. The king always stands behind the *maestro di capella*, in sight of the score, which he frequently looks at; and, indeed, performs the part of director-general here, as much as of generalissimo in the field."

Our tourist was admitted to the king's evening concert, at the palace of Sans Souci. "I was carried thither between five and six o'clock in the evening, by an officer of the household, a privileged person; otherwise it would have been impossible for a stranger like myself to gain admission into a palace where the king resides; and even with my well-known guide I under-

* *Present State of Music in Germany*, vol. ii.

went a severe examination, not only at going out of the gates of Potsdam, but at every door of the palace. I was carried to one of the interior apartments of the palace, in which the gentlemen of the king's band were waiting for his commands. This apartment was contiguous to the concert-room, where I could distinctly hear his majesty practising *solfeggi* on the flute, and exercising himself in difficult passages, previous to his calling in the band. Here I met with M. Benda, who was so obliging as to introduce me to M. Quantz.

"The figure of this veteran musician is of an uncommon size;—

> The son of Hercules he justly seems,
> By his broad shoulders and gigantic limbs;

and he appears to enjoy an uncommon portion of health and vigour for a person arrived at his seventy-sixth year. We soon began a musical conversation. He told me that his majesty and scholar played no other concertos than those which he had expressly composed for his use, which amounted to three hundred, and these he performed in rotation. This exclusive attachment to the productions of his old master may appear somewhat contracted; however it implies a constancy of disposition but rarely to be found among princes. The compositions of the two Grauns and of Quantz, have been in favour with his Prussian majesty more than forty years; and if it be true, as many assert, that music has declined and degenerated since that time, in which the Scarlattis, Vincis, Leos, Pergolesis, and Porporas flourished, as well as the greatest singers that modern times have known, it is an indication of a sound judgment, and of great discernment

in his majesty, to adhere thus firmly to the productions of a period which may be called the Augustan age of music. To stem the torrent of caprice and fashion with such unshaken constancy, is possessing a kind of *stet sol*, by which Apollo and his sons are prevented from running riot, or changing from good to bad, and from bad to worse.

"These reflections, which occurred to me while I was conversing with M. Quantz, were interrupted by the arrival of a messenger from the king, commanding the gentlemen of his band to attend him in the next room.

"The concert began by a German flute concerto, in which his majesty executed the solo parts with great precision. His *embouchure* was clear and even, and his taste pure and simple. I was much pleased and even surprised with the neatness of his execution in the *allegros*, as well as by his expression and feeling in the *adagio*. In short, his performance surpassed, in many particulars, anything I had ever heard among *dilettanti*, or even professors. His majesty played three long and difficult concertos successively, and all with equal perfection.

"It must be owned, that many of the passages in these pieces of M. Quantz are now become old and common. But this does not prove their deficiency in novelty when they were first composed, as some of them have been made more than forty years; and though M. Quantz has not been permitted to publish them, as they were originally composed for his majesty, and have ever been appropriated solely to his use, yet in a series of years, other composers have hit

upon the same thoughts. It is with music as with delicate wines, which not only become flat and insipid when exposed to the air, but are injured by time, however well kept.

"M. Quantz bore no other part in the performance of the concertos of to-night than to give the time with the motion of his hand at the beginning of each movement, except now and then to cry out, *bravo!* to his royal scholar at the end of the solo parts and closes; which seems to be a privilege allowed to no other musician of the band. The cadences which his majesty made were good, but very long and studied. It is easy to discover that these concertos were composed at a time when he did not so frequently require an opportunity of breathing as at present; for in some of the divisions, which were very long and difficult, as well as in the closes, he was obliged to take his breath, contrary to rule, before the passages were finished.

"After these concertos were played, the concert of the night ended, and I returned to Potsdam; but not without undergoing the same interrogatories from all the sentinels, as I had before done in my way to Sans Souci.

"Besides the three hundred concertos which his majesty plays in turn, he has nearly as many solos which he performs in the like rotation. Upwards of a hundred of these have been composed by himself; the rest by M. Quantz."

In another place Dr. Burney says,—"The music of this country is more truly German than that of any other part of the empire; for though there are constantly Italian operas here in carnival time, his Prussian

majesty will suffer none to be performed but those of Graun, Agricola, and Hasse, and, of this last and best, but very few; and, in the opera-house, as in the field, his majesty is such a rigid disciplinarian, that if a mistake is made in a single movement or evolution, he immediately marks and rebukes the offender: and, if any of his Italian troops dare to deviate from strict discipline, by adding, altering, or diminishing a single passage in the parts they have to perform, an order is sent, *de par le roi*, for them to adhere strictly to the notes written by the composer, at their peril. This, when compositions are good, and a singer is licentious, may be an excellent method; but certainly shuts out all taste and refinement. So that music is truly stationary in this country, his majesty allowing no more liberty in that than he does in matters of civil government; not contented with being sole monarch of the lives, fortunes, and business of his subjects, he even prescribes rules to their most innocent pleasures."

The king of Prussia was by no means the only German potentate of that day who patronised and cultivated music. The duke of Wurtemberg was a good player on the harpsichord, gave an inordinate share of his attention to music, and supported a great musical establishment, at an expense which must have pressed heavily on the resources of his small territory. "His passion for music and shows," says Burney, "seems as strong as that of the Emperor Nero was formerly. It is, perhaps, upon such occasions as these that music becomes a vice and hurtful to society; for that nation, of which half the subjects are stage-players, fiddlers, and soldiers, and the other half beggars, seems to be

but ill-governed." The elector of Bavaria was a first-rate performer on the viol-da-gamba; and the electress dowager of Saxony was not only an accomplished singer, but an excellent composer. Burney compares an air in her opera of *Talestri* to the best opera songs of Handel. The same writer describes the imperial family as very musical; almost every member of it, including the emperor himself, being a performer. "A person of great distinction," he says, "told me that he saw some years ago, four archduchesses of Austria, the emperor's sisters, appear at court in the opera of *Egeria*, written by Metastasio, and set by Hasse, expressly for their use. They were then extremely beautiful, sung and acted very well for princesses; and the grand duke of Tuscany, who was likewise very handsome, danced in the character of Cupid."

Among the composers of the last century, none contributed more to the improvement of dramatic music than the celebrated CHRISTOPHER GLUCK. He was born in 1714, at Weidenwangen, in the Upper Palatinate. Early in his childhood, his father, a poor man, removed into Bohemia, and soon afterwards died, leaving him unprovided for, and without the means of education. But Gluck was born a musician; and, in Bohemia, a certain degree of instruction in this art is accessible even to the poorest. He became enabled to support himself by travelling from town to town, till at last he made his way to Vienna, where he earned money enough to procure something of a regular education. He had the good fortune to obtain the protection of a nobleman, who took him to Italy. At Milan, he received instructions from the celebrated

Martini; and, during a residence of four years in that country, he composed several operas, which were performed at Milan, Venice, Cremona, and Turin. In 1745, his reputation was such, that he was invited to come to England in the capacity of composer to the Opera. But he had not then acquired the great style which afterwards distinguished him, and his compositions for the English stage were attended with moderate success. The best of them was *Artamene*, which contained the beautiful air of "Rasserena il mesto ciglio."

Gluck went to England at an unfortunate time. Handel was then so high in fame, that the public would hardly listen to any music but his. The rebellion broke out; and, in the alarm it occasioned, all foreigners were looked upon with suspicion, as dangerous to the state. The Opera-house was shut by up order of the Lord Chamberlain; and it was with great difficulty that Lord Middlesex obtained permission to open it again with a temporary and political piece, composed by Gluck, called *La Caduta de' Giganti*. "On this piece," says Burney, "Gluck worked with fear and trembling, not only on account of the few friends he had in England, but from an apprehension of riot and popular fury, at the opening of a theatre in which none but foreigners and papists were employed." It was to his residence in England, however, (as Gluck himself told Dr. Burney) that he entirely owed the study of nature in his dramatic compositions. He closely observed the English taste; remarked particularly what the audience seemed most to feel; and, finding that plainness and simplicity had the greatest

effect upon them, he endeavoured to write for the voice, more according to the natural tones of the passions and affections, than with the view of displaying profound science or difficult execution.

Gluck returned to Italy, and afterwards to Vienna, with his mind filled with new views of the principles of his art,—the fruits of observation and experience. He had become convinced that the object of the Italian composers was more to gratify the ear than to render their music subservient to the action of the drama. He admitted the beauty of the Italian airs, but thought them defective in energy and strength of expression. "They are very charming," he used to say, "but they do not draw blood." He determined, therefore, to abandon the Italian style, in which his own operas had hitherto been written; and, as his objections applied to the poetry, as well as the music of the Italian stage, he felt it necessary to have a dramatist willing to co-operate with him in his plan of reform. Such a poet he found in Calzabigi, who wrote the operas of *Orfeo*, *Armida*, and *Alceste*,—pieces of great dramatic merit, which the music of Gluck has rendered immortal. *Alceste* was published with a dedication to the grand duke of Tuscany, in which the composer has ably developed the principles which guided him in its production.

"When I undertook," he says, "to set this poem, it was my design to divest the music of all those abuses with which the vanity of singers, or the too great complacency of composers, had so long disfigured the Italian opera, and rendered the most beautiful and magnificent of all public exhibitions, the most tiresome

and ridiculous. It was my intention to confine music to its true dramatic province, of assisting poetical expression, and of augmenting the interest of the fable, without interrupting the action, or chilling it with useless and superfluous ornaments: for the office of music, when joined to poetry, seemed to me to resemble that of colouring in a correct and well-disposed design, where the lights and shades seem only to animate the figures, without altering the outline.

"I determined, therefore, not to stop an actor, in the heat of a spirited dialogue, for a tedious *ritornel;* nor to impede the progress of passion by lengthening a single syllable of a favourite word, merely to display agility of throat; and I was equally inflexible in my resolution not to employ the orchestra to so poor a purpose as that of giving time for the recovery of breath sufficient for a long and unmeaning cadence.

"I never thought it necessary to hurry through the second part of a song, though the most impassioned and important, in order to repeat the words of the first part regularly four times, merely to finish the air, where the sense is unfinished, and to give an opportunity to the singer of showing that he has the impertinent power of varying passages, and disguising them till they shall be no longer known to the composer himself. In short, I tried to banish all those vices of the musical drama, against which good sense and reason have so long complained in vain.

"I imagined that the overture ought to prepare the audience for the action of the piece, and serve as a kind of argument to it; that the instrumental accompaniment should be regulated by the interest of the drama,

and not leave a void in the dialogue between the air and recitative; that it should neither break into the sense and connexion of a period, nor wantonly interrupt the energy or heat of the action.

"And lastly, it was my opinion, that my first and chief care, as a dramatic composer, was to aim at a noble simplicity; and I have accordingly shunned all parade of unnatural difficulty in favour of clearness; nor have I sought or studied novelty, if it did not arise naturally from the situation of the character and poetical expression; and there is no rule of composition which I have not thought it my duty to sacrifice, in order to favour passion, and produce effects."

To these principles Gluck strictly adhered, not only in the composition of the piece which gave occasion to their enouncement, but of all his subsequent works. They may appear too obvious to entitle any one to much credit for discovering and acting upon them. But the greatest discoveries seem very obvious when once they are made; and, to estimate the merit of any discovery, we must consider the state of knowledge or of opinion at the time it took place. Now, before Gluck explained and exemplified his principles of dramatic composition, no musician of any country had shown himself aware of them, so as, by their help, to emancipate himself, as Gluck did, from the conventional trammels by which the music of the opera was fettered. Of these, for instance, one of the most glaringly absurd was the rule alluded to in the above passage, that the second part of a song was to be hurried through, without regard to the importance or expression of the poetry, in order to repeat and finish with the first part of the air; yet this

preposterous rule was constantly followed, and by none more implicitly than by the greatest and most original of composers, Handel himself, in whose numerous Italian operas, the songs, whatever may be their subject or character, are, almost without exception, cast in one unvarying mould. The words of the first stanza are repeated several times, while the subject of the air is fully developed, and a close takes place in the original key. The second stanza is comprised in a few bars, generally in a relative minor key, if the subject is major, and without repeating or dwelling upon the words; then there is an imperfect close, and a "*da capo*," and the whole first part of the song is sung over again. This unmeaning rule, so destructive of dramatic expression and effect, has been long since abandoned; but, while it prevailed, uniform custom blinded every composer to its absurdity; and it required no less strength of judgment than firmness of purpose, to abolish at once a rule which even a Handel did not dream of infringing. It required similar originality and energy of mind to banish the long divisions, the tedious *ritornels*, the redundant ornaments, and other abuses which disfigured the music of the drama.

Gluck's experiment was completely successful. The first opera, composed according to the new method he had determined to adopt, was *Orfeo*, which was performed at Vienna in 1764. The novelty of its style was at first more surprising than pleasing to a public accustomed to the conventional forms of the Italian opera. But the energy and expression of the music, and the manner in which it heightened and animated

the dramatic action, were soon powerfully felt; and after a few representations, the piece was universally applauded. In the following year it was performed at Parma; afterwards at Naples, Rome, Milan, Venice, and Bologna; and everywhere with the most splendid success. It is said that the city of Bologna, in a single winter, profited to the amount of fifty thousand pounds by the concourse of strangers attracted by the representations of *Orfeo*.

When at Naples, Gluck wrote two operas, one of which contained an air which was objected to by the Neapolitan professors, on account of a long pause in the voice part, while the orchestra continued the movement. They appealed to Durante. "I will not pretend to decide," said the illustrious veteran, "how far this is strictly agreeable to rule; but one thing I can assure you, that any of us might be very proud of having imagined such a passage." *Alceste* was first performed at Vienna, in 1768, and met with even greater admiration than its precursor. At the court theatre, no other piece was performed for two years.

Gluck had reached the age of sixty when the most remarkable period of his history commenced. His attention having been turned to the French stage, he went to Paris in 1774. His residence in that capital forms an era in the history of French music, and will accordingly be noticed in a subsequent chapter. In 1779, he returned to Vienna, where he resided during the last years of his life, in the quiet enjoyment of an ample fortune, and his great reputation. He died of apoplexy in 1787, at the age of seventy-three. Dr. Burney, who visited him at Vienna in 1773, says that

he was much pitted with the small-pox, and very coarse in figure and look. He is described as having been of a choleric and impatient temper, but frank, sincere, and benevolent.

Gluck was unquestionably one of the greatest dramatic composers who has ever existed, and one of the greatest reformers in this branch of the art. He had a highly cultivated taste in poetry and literature, as well as a genius for music. During his whole life, he was connected with the most distinguished literary men of his time, and acquired, from his intercourse with them, and from his acquaintance with the great models of dramatic poetry, bolder and more lofty notions than had yet been conceived of the effects which might be produced by the union of poetry and music. His first care, before beginning to compose the music of a drama, was to satisfy himself that the drama was worthy of his labours; and he had the good fortune, or rather the good judgment, to obtain the co-operation of a poet whose principles were similar to his own, and who had talent sufficient to reduce them to practice. His next care was, to make use of his art, not as a means of merely gratifying the ears of an audience, but of giving strength and expression to the feelings and passions of his characters. "Before I set to work," he himself said, "my first care is to strive to forget that I am a musician." The proper dramatic use of the chorus, that great feature in the modern opera, may be said to have been discovered by him. He was the first who made the chorus take a part in the action of the piece, and produced great effects by the vehement and impassioned expressions of an agitated multitude.

His extreme attention to the dramatic character of his music is illustrated by several anecdotes given by his biographers.

He was one day playing over to some of his friends the scene in *Iphigenie in Tauride*, where Orestes, left to himself in his prison, after a paroxysm of agitation, throws himself on a seat, saying, "La calme rentre dans mon cœur." A person present thought he perceived a contradiction between this phrase and the accompaniment, which continued to be of an agitated character. "Orestes is calm," he said to Gluck,—"he says so." "He lies," exclaimed the composer, "he thinks he is calm while he is only exhausted; but the fury is always in his breast—he has killed his mother."

Rousseau was a warm admirer of the genius of Gluck; on one occasion he remarked, that the great merit of this composer was his giving a distinct character to the airs of each of his personages; an attention which, however, had made him commit an anachronism in his opera of *Paris and Helena*. "The songs of *Paris*," said Rousseau, "have all the richness and effeminacy of Phrygian manners, while those of *Helena* are constantly grave and simple; but Gluck has forgotten that the Spartan severity of manners had its origin in the legislation of Lycurgus, and that Helena was born long before that time." This observation was communicated to Gluck. "I should be happy," he said, in answer, "if my works were always examined by such enlightened and scrupulous judges. M. Rousseau's reasoning is very ingenious, but I viewed the subject differently. Helena loved Paris; but I find in Homer that she endeavoured to elevate his

mind and excite in him a love of glory. I see that she was esteemed by Hector; and the praise she drew from the old men as she passed, indicates as much respect for her character as admiration of her beauty. Thus, by giving her a simple and grave, but elegant style of singing, I do not mean to characterize a Spartan woman merely, but a high and generous soul."

The criticism as well as the defence may be thought to be considering the matter too curiously; but it is only by this attention to the spirit of the poem, the habits and manners of the age and country in which the scene is laid, and the characters and dispositions of the various persons of the drama, that truly dramatic music can be produced. Without this, the composer may delight the ear, but he will never excite the feelings and sympathies of the audience. The great example set by Gluck, in this respect, has been followed by the greatest composers of his own country; and the works of Weber, in particular, evince an attention to dramatic propriety equal to that of Gluck himself. In the modern Italian school every consideration of this kind is disregarded; and, among ourselves, the composers for the stage seem to consider the quality of the dramas on which they employ themselves a matter of indifference; so that we have repeatedly seen great labour and talent spent upon heaps of doggerel and the most contemptible and childish absurdities.

The intellectual character of Gluck's music has been made a subject of reproach by the partisans of the Italian school. They call it hard and dry, and say sarcastically that it is addressed to the understanding and not to the ear. Never having witnessed the per-

formance of any of his operas, we cannot speak of their effect from our own knowledge; but it is impossible to read the accounts of their enthusiastic reception in Germany, Italy, and France, and to observe how long they have kept possession of the stage in all those countries, without being convinced that they possess the highest qualities of dramatic music. The perusal of the scores of these operas is sufficient to confirm this belief. Rousseau, though a devoted partisan of the Italian school of his day, ridiculed the opinion that Gluck was defective in melody. "For my part," he said, "I find that melody issues from all his pores." It appears to us that Gluck's airs, though they want the luxuriant richness and ample development of those of his Italian rivals, are simple, natural, and expressive. They are always brief, and frequently abrupt in their transitions and terminations; but if they thus lose something in grace and mere musical beauty, they gain more in dramatic truth and effect. We cannot go through the operas of Gluck without being struck with Mozart's obligations to this great master. We find in them not only the elements of Mozart's style, but multitudes of his peculiar phrases and combinations, both of melody and harmony. In his use of the orchestra, and especially of the brass instruments, Gluck led the way to the more powerful and varied effects produced by Mozart and his successors; and on the whole he may be considered as the father of the modern German school of dramatic composition.

CHAPTER XII.

MUSIC IN GERMANY IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY, CONTINUED.—HAYDN.

JOSEPH HAYDN was born on the 31st of March, 1732, at Rohrau, a village in Austria. His father was a poor wheelwright, to which occupation he united that of parish sexton. Both he and his wife had a taste for music; and the first musical impressions which Haydn received were from the little family concerts of his parents, on Sundays and holidays, when his mother sang, and his father played on the harp, while he himself, standing at his mother's knee, with two pieces of wood in his hand, to represent a violin and a bow, accompanied her voice. Haydn, during his whole life, remembered the little simple melodies which first delighted his ear, and which were indelibly associated with the memory of her whose tenderness had "looked on his childhood."

A schoolmaster of the name of Frank, a cousin of his father, who understood music, and noticed his early capacity for the art, offered to take him and attend to his education; and the proposal was gladly accepted. The schoolmaster did not neglect his duty to his young kinsman. He taught him Latin, to play on the violin and other instruments, and to sing at the parish church. Haydn had a fine voice; and his performance attracted the notice of Reüter, a chapel-master of Vienna, who

was in search of voices for the choir of St. Stephen's cathedral. He carried Haydn with him, and placed him in the choir, where the young musician remained eleven years. During this time, his application to the study of music was unremitting. The instinct of genius led him to attempt composition; and he began to feel the necessity of acquiring a knowledge of the rules of counterpoint. But Reüter gave no instructions of this kind, and Haydn had no money to pay for lessons. He picked up, however, some old books on the subject, and, in particular, the treatise of Fux, through which he contrived to labour, neither appalled by its excessive obscurity, nor disheartened by the hardships and privations under which he pursued his solitary studies. Indeed he often said that these were among the happiest days of his life. He was poor and friendless, lived in a wretched garret, and wanted the common necessaries of life; but his days and nights passed rapidly and cheerfully, spent in the labour in which he delighted, and in the consciousness of daily increasing intellectual riches and power. While in this situation he had the good fortune to gain the favour of Porpora,* who was then at Vienna, and from whom he received some valuable lessons. The Venetian ambassador, with whom Porpora resided, was so pleased with the young man's proficiency in singing, that he made him a small monthly allowance, and admitted him to the table of his secretaries. Haydn was now enabled to dress himself in a respectable suit of black, and was employed to play on the violin or organ, or to sing at different chapels in the city. After spending the day in these fatiguing occu-

* See *antè*, page 224.

pations, he generally passed the greater part of the night at his harpsichord.

Thus he lived till the age of nineteen, when he was dismissed from the choir of St. Stephens, in consequence, it was said, of the breaking of his voice, but really, of a boyish frolic he had committed in cutting off the skirt of a fellow-chorister's gown in the church. In this situation he found an asylum in the house of a poor periwig-maker of the name of Keller, who had been an admirer of his singing at the cathedral. Keller and his wife treated him with much kindness, and he continued, under their roof, to follow his musical pursuits. But their kindness, it would seem, was not quite disinterested. They had two daughters, for one of whom they thought a young musician of rising talent would be a tolerable match; and Haydn, in his utter simplicity and ignorance of the world, was easily persuaded into a promise of marriage, which he afterwards honourably fulfilled.

Haydn by degrees obtained a few pupils; and his first productions were little pieces for the harpsichord, written for their use. He also composed dances for the *Ridotto*, a place of fashionable resort in Vienna. Some of his music having fallen in the way of a celebrated comedian of the name of Curtz, who then had the management of one of the theatres, he was so much struck with its originality, that he employed the composer to write the music for an opera entitled *The Devil on Two Sticks*, for which he received twenty-four sequins, —twelve pounds sterling. Haydn, in after-days, used to give a ludicrous account of the difficulties he met with, in attempting to represent a sea-storm in this

opera. Neither the author of the words, who was Curtz himself, nor the composer, had ever seen the sea, and their notions of its appearance in a storm were necessarily somewhat vague. Haydn sat at the harpsichord, while Curtz paced about the room, and endeavoured to furnish the composer with ideas. "Imagine," said he, "a mountain rising, and then a valley sinking;—and then another mountain and another valley;—the mountains and valleys must follow each other every instant. Then you must have claps of thunder and flashes of lightning, and the noise of the wind; but, above all, you must represent distinctly the mountains and valleys." Haydn, meanwhile, kept trying all sorts of passages,—ran up and down the scale, and exhausted his ingenuity in heaping together chromatic intervals and strange discords. Still Curtz was not satisfied. At last the musician, out of all patience, extended his hands to the two extremities of the keys, and bringing them rapidly together, exclaimed, "The deuce take the tempest,—I can make nothing of it." "That is the very thing!" exclaimed Curtz, delighted with the *truth* of the representation. The success, however, of this attempt at musical painting, of which Haydn afterwards became so great a master, was not put to the test, as this, his first opera, was never performed, having been prohibited through the influence of a nobleman, who imagined that the satire was directed against him. Haydn afterwards wrote many operas; but they made little impression, and are now forgotten.

About this time Haydn entered on his brilliant career as a composer of instrumental music, by the production of six trios for two violins and a bass. The novelty and

originality of their style brought them immediately into general notice; and, as might be expected, the innovations with which they were filled, were vehemently attacked by the adherents to established rules. At twenty, he produced his first quartet for two violins, tenor and bass; thus creating that delightful species of music, in which the greatest modern composers have exerted their utmost powers, without being able to excel, if indeed they have been able to rival him.

Haydn now left the house of his friend the wig-maker, and went to reside with M. Martinetz, who offered him board and lodging, on condition that he should give lessons on the harpsichord and in singing, to the two daughters of his host. Metastasio also lived in the house of M. Martinetz. He soon appreciated the talents of the young composer, with whom he took pleasure in conversing; and Haydn derived great advantage from this intercourse with a man so thoroughly acquainted with the fine arts. One of Haydn's pupils seems to have gained extraordinary proficiency both as a composer and a performer, as she must be the same Mademoiselle Martinetz who is often mentioned with much regard by Metastasio in his correspondence, and of whose attainments Dr. Burney, in his account of his visit to Vienna, speaks with great admiration. In 1758, Haydn left the house of M. Martinetz, to enter into the service of Count Mortzin; in which situation he attracted the notice of Prince Antony Esterhazy, a circumstance which fixed the destiny of his future life.

At a concert at Count Mortzin's, at which Prince Esterhazy was present, a symphony of Haydn's was performed, with which the prince was so charmed, that

he entreated Count Mortzin to give up Haydn to him, declaring his intention of appointing him second leader of his own orchestra. The matter, however, was forgotten, till a friend of Haydn's, a musician in the prince's employment, contrived to bring it to his recollection. He got Haydn to compose a symphony, to be performed at Eisenstadt, the prince's residence, on his birth-day. It was performed accordingly; and scarcely was the first movement finished when the prince inquired who was the author of that fine composition. Haydn was called for, and came forward in great agitation. "What!" cried the prince, looking at Haydn's swarthy visage, "is it this Moor's music? Well, Moor, you remain in my service. What is your name?" "Joseph Haydn." "Surely I remember that name; you are already engaged to me:—how is it that I have not seen you before?" Haydn was too confused to make any reply. The prince continued, "Well—go and dress yourself like a professor; don't let me see you any longer in so pitiful a trim. Get a new coat, a wig, and buckles, a collar, and red heels to your shoes,—but I particularly desire that they may be of a good height, that your stature may correspond with your intelligence,—you understand me. Go your way, and you shall have everything you require." Haydn retired, and appeared next morning at his highness's levee, in the prescribed costume, and entered on his functions as second leader of the prince's band. Prince Antony, dying soon after, was succeeded by Prince Nicholas, who was, if possible, a still more ardent amateur than his father. He was a performer on the *baryton*, a stringed instrument, something between the tenor and the violoncello, which has

now fallen into disuse. Haydn composed a great number of pieces in order to supply the prince's incessant demand for novelty; and he often said that the necessity he was under of composing so much for this instrument contributed much to his improvement.

Being now in circumstances that enabled him to fulfil his engagement to the daughter of his old friend Keller, Haydn married her. The marriage proved unhappy, through faults, apparently, on both sides; and at length a separation took place. The lady is accused by Haydn's principal biographer, of being "a prude, who, besides her troublesome virtue, had a mania for priests and monks;" while it is at the same time admitted, that the husband was guilty of an open breach of conjugal fidelity in forming a connexion with a singer belonging to Prince Esterhazy's establishment. This part of Haydn's life cannot be contemplated without censure and regret. It cannot be reconciled with the religious and moral principles by which his actions, in general, were unquestionably governed; and though it may be explained, yet it cannot be justified, by the lax notions respecting the sanctity of the marriage vow which he may have imbibed from the habits of society prevalent in the most licentious capital in Europe.

Haydn was now placed in the most favourable situation for the full development of his powers. He was at the head of a great orchestra, in easy circumstances, and wholly free from the cares and troubles of the world. From this time his life was regular and constantly employed. He rose early in the morning, dressed himself very neatly, and placed himself at a little table by the side of his piano-forte, where he remained with

the interruption only of his meals. In the evening he attended rehearsals, or the opera, which was performed four times a week in the prince's palace. Occasionally he amused himself with hunting, and gave the rest of his hours of relaxation to the society of his friends.

Such was his life for thirty years, during which time he produced in rapid succession that prodigious variety of compositions which filled the world with his fame. Living in the utmost retirement, and seldom leaving the little town in Hungary which belonged to the Esterhazy family, he himself was, perhaps, the only musical man in Europe who was ignorant of the celebrity of Joseph Haydn. The first homage he received consisted of a commission from a Parisian amateur to compose a piece of vocal music, accompanied with some select passages of Lulli and Rameau to serve as models. He returned for answer, with sly simplicity, that he was Haydn, and not Lulli or Rameau; and that if music, after the manner of those great composers was wanted, it should be asked from them or their pupils; but that, as to himself, he unfortunately could write music only after the manner of Haydn.

In 1790, Mr. Salomon, who had undertaken to give concerts in London, made proposals to Haydn to assist in conducting these concerts, and to compose pieces for them; offering him 50*l.* for each concert. Haydn accepted the offer, and arrived in England at the age of fifty-nine. He remained in London about twelve months, during which time he composed some of the finest of his works, particularly the magnificent orchestral compositions so well known as the "Twelve Symphonies for Salomon's Concerts," and the beautiful

English canzonets, the poetry of which was written by Mrs. Hunter.

Haydn used to relate several whimsical anecdotes of his stay in London. A captain of the navy came to him one morning, and asked him to compose a march for some troops he had on board, offering him thirty guineas for his trouble, but requiring it to be done immediately, as the vessel was to sail next day for Calcutta. As soon as the captain was gone, Haydn sat down to the piano-forte, and the march was ready in a few minutes. Feeling some scruples at gaining his money so very easily, Haydn wrote two other marches, intending first to give the captain his choice, and then to make him a present of all the three, as a return for his liberality. Next morning the captain returned, and asked for his march. "Here it is," said the composer. The captain asked to hear it on the piano-forte; and having done so, laid down the thirty guineas, pocketed the march, and walked away. Haydn tried to stop him, but in vain—the march was very good. "But I have written two others," cried Haydn, "which are better—hear them and take your choice." "I like the first very well, and that is enough," answered the captain, pursuing his way down stairs. Haydn followed, crying out, "But I make you a present of them." "I won't have them!" roared the seaman, with a nautical asseveration, and bolted out at the street door. Haydn, determined not to be outdone, hastened to the Exchange, and, discovering the name of the ship and her commander, sent the marches on board with a polite note, which the captain, surmising its contents, sent back unopened. Haydn tore

the marches into a thousand pieces, and never forgot this liberal English humourist as long as he lived.

Haydn used also to relate with much satisfaction, a dispute he had with a London music-seller. Going into his shop, one day, he asked if he had any good music newly published. "Certainly," said the music-seller; "I have got some sublime music of Haydn's." "Oh," answered Haydn, "I'll have nothing to do with that." "How, sir, nothing to do with Haydn's music! and pray what fault have you to find with it?" "Oh, plenty; but it is useless talking about it, since it does not suit. Show me something else." The music-seller, who was a warm Haydnist, replied with indignation, "I have got music, it is true, but not for such judges as you;" and turned his back upon the stranger. As Haydn was leaving the shop, pleased and tickled with the adventure, a friend came in and saluted him by name. The shopkeeper turned round at the name, and said to the gentleman who had just come in, "Haydn! aye—here's a pretty fellow for you, who says he does not like that great man's music." The gentleman laughed heartily; an explanation took place, and the enthusiastic music-seller was introduced to the man who had dared to find fault with Haydn's music.

While he resided in London, Haydn enjoyed two high gratifications; that of hearing the music of Handel, with which, like most of his countrymen at that time, he was very slightly acquainted, and that of being present at the concerts of ancient music, which were then splendidly patronised, and carried on with great talent. He witnessed the annual celebration in St. Paul's cathedral, which is attended by the children

belonging to the charity schools in the metropolis; and was affected even to tears by the psalms sung in unison by four thousand infantine voices. One of these tunes he jotted down in his memorandum-book; and he used afterwards to say, that this simple and natural air gave him the greatest pleasure he had ever received from music.

Haydn returned to England in 1794, having been engaged by Gallini, the manager of the Opera-house, to compose an opera for that theatre, on the subject of *Orpheus and Eurydice*. But there was some difficulty about opening the theatre, and Haydn left England without having finished his opera. During this visit, he had the honour of the diploma of a doctor of music conferred on him by the university of Oxford. He enthusiastically admired Mrs. Billington, who was then in the plenitude of her powers and reputation; and it was for her he composed the fine and well-known cantata of *Ariadne abbandonata*.

After Haydn's return from England, he undertook his great work, *The Creation*. While in London, he had been inspired with the most profound admiration for the music of Handel, and especially *The Messiah*; and it is to this feeling that the world is certainly indebted for *The Creation*. He began this work in 1795, when he was sixty-three years of age, and finished it in the beginning of 1798, having been constantly employed upon it for more than two years. When urged by his friends to bring it to a conclusion, he used to say calmly, "I spend a long time upon it, because I intend it to last a long time." In the Lent of the above year, it was performed for the first time, in the

Schwartzenberg palace, at the expense of the Dilettanti Society of Vienna, before the flower of the literary and musical society of that city; the composer himself conducting the orchestra. It was received with an enthusiasm which soon spread throughout all Europe. It was while the First Consul of France was on his way to witness its first performance in Paris, that the memorable attempt was made to destroy him by means of an "infernal machine." It was performed about the same time in London; and, from that time to the present, it has formed a part of every great performance of sacred music.

Two years after the appearance of *The Creation*, Haydn produced another work, of a similar form, called *The Seasons*, the words of which are taken from Thomson. This work was also performed for the first time in the Schwartzenberg palace, and received with the warmest applause. It did not, however, make so rapid or strong an impression as that which was made by *The Creation*. Its subject is not so sublime, nor are its beauties so obvious and striking. It is, however, a magnificent composition, worthy of its immortal author; and it is discreditable to England that it has never yet been performed entire in this country, on a scale commensurate with its own greatness*.

This work terminated Haydn's musical career. By the labours of his long life, he had acquired a moderate

* *The Seasons* has been performed entire at the concerts of the Royal Academy of Music, in a manner which does great honour to the academy and its pupils. To produce its full effect, however, it must be performed on a great scale, with such an orchestra and chorus as are assembled at our musical festivals.

competency; and, after his last return from England, he purchased a small house and garden in one of the suburbs of Vienna, where he resided for the remaining years of his life. Soon after he had taken possession of his little home, he received a communication from the National Institute of France, informing him that he had been nominated an associate of that body; an honour by which he was deeply affected. He now began to sink rapidly under the pressure of age and infirmities. He seldom quitted his house and garden; and his enfeebled mind began to be haunted with the double fear of poverty and disease. The visits of his friends would rouse him, and, in conversing with them, he occasionally showed his former cheerfulness and vivacity. When he was told that the French Institute, in 1805, supposing him to be dead, had performed a *requiem* for him, he said pleasantly, "If these kind gentlemen had given me notice of my death, I would have gone myself to beat the time for them." But these gleams were brief and transient, and he sank into his usual state of torpor and depression.

While he was in this state, his friends in Vienna resolved to have a performance of *The Creation*. It took place in the palace of Prince Lobkowitz, with an orchestra of one hundred and sixty performers, and before an audience of more than fifteen hundred of the nobility and gentry of the Austrian capital. Haydn, feeble as he was, expressed his desire to appear once more in the presence of that public for whom he had laboured so long, and from whom he had received so many marks of favour and esteem. He was carried into the room in an easy chair, attended by the Prin-

cess Esterhazy, and other ladies, who went to the door to meet him, and was placed in the middle of the seats occupied by the most illustrious personages in Vienna, amid the flourishes of the orchestra, and the plaudits of the audience. The performance began; and the feelings of the assembly, inspired by the sublime music, were raised to enthusiasm by the aspect of the venerable composer who now appeared among them to take farewell of them for ever. An eminent physician, who sat near him, having remarked that his legs were not sufficiently protected from the cold, the finest and most costly shawls were instantly pulled from the shoulders of their fair wearers who surrounded him, and employed in making him warm and comfortable. The old man shed tears at this mark of affection. At the end of the first act, feeling himself exhausted with fatigue and emotion, he requested to be taken home. Before reaching the door, he desired the persons who were bearing him in his chair to stop, and, having first taken farewell of the audience by bowing his head, he turned to the orchestra, and, with his eyes raised to heaven, and full of tears, uttered a parting blessing on the old companions of his labours.

Haydn did not long survive this touching scene. The tranquillity of his last days was disturbed by the alarms of war. In the struggle between Austria and France in 1809, the Emperor Napoleon carried his army to the very gates of Vienna. During this dreadful campaign, Haydn was greatly agitated. He was constantly inquiring for news, and used to sit at his piano-forte, singing with his feeble and trembling voice, "God preserve the Emperor!" On the night

of the 10th of May, the French reached Schoenbrunn; and next morning, from a position within a few yards of Haydn's house, they fired fifteen hundred cannon-shot and shells upon the city, which the old man's imagination represented to him as given up to fire and sword. Four bombs fell close to his dwelling, and their explosion filled his little household with terror. He roused himself, and, getting up from his chair, rebuked his servants with dignity for their want of firmness. But the effort was too much for him; he was seized with a convulsive shivering, and carried to bed. His strength continued to diminish; yet, on the 26th of May, he caused himself to be placed at his piano-forte, where he again sang the national hymn, three times over, with all his remaining energy. It was the song of the swan. While he still sat at the piano-forte, he fell into a state of stupor, and at last expired on the morning of the 31st of May, aged seventy-eight years and two months. He was privately interred in the suburb of Gumpendorff, in which he resided, Vienna being in the possession of the French; and the *Requiem* of Mozart was performed for him in the Scotch Church of the city. His heir was a blacksmith or farrier, to whom he left 38,000 florins, deducting 12,000, which he bequeathed to his two faithful servants. His manuscripts were sold by auction, and purchased by Prince Esterhazy. None of them, we believe, have been published.

Such was the life of this great, and it may be added, good man. He was a stranger to every evil and malignant passion; and, indeed, was not much under the influence of passion of any sort. But his disposition

was cheerful and gentle, and his heart was brimful of kindly affections. He was friendly and benevolent, open and candid in the expression of his sentiments, always ready to acknowledge and aid the claims of talent in his own art, and, in all his actions, distinguished by the most spotless integrity. Such is the account of him given by all those who knew him best; and they add, as the most remarkable feature of his character, that strong and deeply-rooted sense of religion, which is the only solid foundation of moral excellence. Haydn's piety was not a mere feeling, capable, as is often the case with worldly men, of being excited for the moment by circumstances, and dying away when the external influence is removed: it was an active principle, which guided the whole tenor of his life and conduct. His sacred music was exalted by the existence, in his mind, of those devout sentiments which it is the object of sacred music to express. "When I was engaged in composing *The Creation*," he used to say, "I felt myself so penetrated with religious feeling, that before I sat down to write, I earnestly prayed to God that he would enable me to praise him worthily." Such, too, was the frame of mind in which Handel applied himself to his immortal labours; and such was the source from which he drew his inspirations.

As a composer, Haydn is great in a variety of styles; but it is in his instrumental music that his original and creative genius chiefly displays itself. His works of this class consist of symphonies for a full orchestra, quartets, and other pieces for a small number of single instruments, and music for the harpsichord or pianoforte.

The symphony, a description of music which embraces many of the most splendid efforts of modern genius, owes almost its existence to Haydn. We have already seen what it was, when in its infancy, in the hands of Bach, Stamitz, and Vanhall; and Haydn's first productions of this kind, in their form, at least, can hardly be distinguished from theirs. They were generally in eight parts,—for first and second violins, tenors, and basses, with two oboes, and two horns. The movements were short and simple, and the harmony thin, the wind instruments doing little more than accompanying the stringed instruments in unison. Haydn began by turning to better account than formerly the powers of the orchestra as it then existed. He extended his movements by giving a more ample development to their subjects; he enriched the harmony; and produced new and beautiful effects by his employment of the wind instruments. By degrees, he swelled the mass of sound, and obtained further varieties of effect, by employing additional instruments, and increasing the number of parts. In this manner he continued to pursue his researches into the regions of orchestral harmony, followed, but never reached, by his contemporaries—till, towards the close of his career, he found a companion in Mozart, who went side by side with him, and even outstripped him in the use of the brazen instruments, the constant addition to the number and discovery of the powers of which, even at the present time, is daily giving new features to the music of our orchestras. Notwithstanding, however, all that has been done by his successors, many of the symphonies of Haydn have never been surpassed. In the exquisite

beauty of the melody, the admirable use made of the peculiar genius and capacity of each instrument, and the perfect clearness which pervades every part of the composition,—some of them have hardly yet been equalled.

The quartet, too, owes almost its existence to Haydn. In his very first production of this class, he made a great stride beyond all the similar music of his day; and from the beginning to the end of the magnificent collection which he has left, we find a constant expansion of his notions respecting this species of composition. The history of the quartet is similar to that of the symphony. In Mozart, Haydn found his only rival; and he has had several successors, of whom the greatest is Beethoven: but, notwithstanding the numerous productions of more modern date, Haydn's quartets remain in undiminished freshness and unfaded lustre.

His pieces for the harpsichord or piano-forte are now little used. He was not much a performer on those instruments, and his compositions for them have been superseded by those of the great modern masters of the piano-forte, which, by successive improvements, has almost become a new instrument. Some of Haydn's sonatas, or trios, for the piano-forte, violin, and violoncello, are beautiful pieces, and ought never to be forgotten.

The vocal music of Haydn consists of his masses, or services, for the Roman Catholic church, his great works, *The Creation* and *The Seasons*, and songs. It is unnecessary to speak of his Italian operas; for, though he composed a number of them, they never acquired

any celebrity; and the manuscript scores of most of them were destroyed by an accidental fire in Prince Esterhazy's palace.

Haydn's masses are well known to the musical public in England, by means of the fine edition of them published by Mr. Novello; and they are frequently performed in the Roman Catholic places of worship in London. Like the other compositions of this description, they consist of airs for solo voices, mingled with duets, trios, quartets, and chorusses, accompanied by a full instrumental orchestra. As published by Mr. Novello, and as performed in England, the instrumental accompaniments are arranged for the organ. It is impossible to hear these compositions without great pleasure and admiration; but, as we have already had occasion to remark, they are not written in the pure ecclesiastical style, nor calculated to excite and sustain those feelings of devotion which ought to accompany the offices of religion. Instead of taking for his models the solemn strains of the great Italian and German masters of an earlier day, Haydn adapted his masses to the taste of his own time, when the style of the theatre had made its way into the church. They are strongly marked by his peculiar beauties, original and graceful melody, and great simplicity and clearness of effect. They contain, too, in many parts, all the solemnity and loftiness which belong to the music of the church; but there is a constant recurrence of those light, airy, and sometimes actually sportive measures, which bring with them the thoughts and feelings of every-day life. Such, perhaps, may not be the effect of this kind of composition on those who are accustomed to it in their

churches. That Haydn felt devoutly in writing these masses, there can be no doubt, and that they may be devoutly listened to is equally certain. Both the composer, and those from whom he wrote, were influenced by the prevailing notions of propriety in respect to this species of music as suited to the purposes of devotion; but many parts of these compositions jar painfully on the minds of those whose conceptions of the character of religious music are derived from the grave and severe style of the English cathedral service.

The Creation and *The Seasons* are both generally designated by the title of *Oratorios*. M. Choron, a very high authority, denies the propriety of the title as applicable to either, and places them in the class of *Cantatas*. The name is not of much importance; but if the character of *sacred* is essential to the definition of an oratorio, *The Seasons* cannot come under this definition. The subject of *The Creation*, as well as its form, is that of an oratorio, and this title may therefore be bestowed upon it without impropriety, though the author, in treating his subject, has not adhered to the ecclesiastical style so strictly as Bach or Handel.

The Creation is divided into three parts. The first part opens with an instrumental symphony descriptive of the primeval confusion of the elements, when "the earth was without form, and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep." Angels are then introduced, describing the creation of light, and the terror of the evil spirits, who fly from the holy beams into the regions of endless night; the creation of the firmament, and of the thunder and lightning, rain, hail, and snow; the gathering together of the waters, and the appear-

ance of the dry land, clothed with trees and plants; and lastly, the appearance of the celestial luminaries. The second part contains the creation of animated nature, terminating with man; and the third part represents the felicity of our first parents in Paradise. In the first and second parts, the persons of the drama are three angels, who sing alternately the wonders of creation, while their songs are combined with chorusses of the heavenly host praising the Almighty. In the last part, the persons are Adam and Eve, who mingle their expressions of love and joy with hymns to their Creator, in which their voices blend with the celestial choir.

It is in the first part of this oratorio that Haydn's genius appears in all its sublimity. This arises, not from his having in any part of the work sunk beneath his subject, but from the subject itself. The first part embraces those phenomena of nature which are not only the grandest in themselves, but the most suitable to musical description,—the sudden burst of new-created light, the roaring of the sea, the rolling of the thunder, the splendour of the rising sun, and the moon gliding through the heavens and shedding her silver beams over the face of the silent earth. Of all these objects, Haydn has produced, through the medium of the ear, pictures of inimitable majesty, beauty, and truth; and it seems to be a consequence of the greatness of the subjects of these representations, that he has terminated them by a chorus, which is not only the most sublime in the work, but is probably unrivalled, except by the "Hallelujah" of Handel.

The second part commences with a beautiful air for

a soprano voice, descriptive of the creation of the birds. The eagle, the lark, the turtle-dove, and the nightingale, are taken as the types of the feathered tribes; and the strain of the melody, alternately bold, lively, and tender, is finely adapted to their different characters; while it is blended with charming instrumental passages imitative of the rapid flight of the eagle, the lively notes of the lark, the cooing of the dove, and the sweet but cheerful song of the nightingale, when

> No grief affected yet her breast,
> Nor to a mournful tale were tuned
> Her soft enchanting lays.

In the first part of the oratorio we have descriptive music in all its grandeur; in this exquisite air we have it in all its beauty. In the movements which follow, the orchestra describes, in a similar way, the different animals, as they are mentioned by the voices, but not always with so happy an effect, because the imitations have sometimes a quaint and even comic character, inconsistent with the gravity of the subject. In the fine trio, "Most beautiful appear," while the bass voice sings the words "Upheaved from the deep, the immense Leviathan sports on the foaming wave," the lashing of the water by the animal's tail is imitated by some *whisking* passages on the double-bass. Then we have the roar of the lion, the sudden leaps of the tiger, the galloping of the horse, the whirl of the clouds of insects, and the sinuous crawling of the reptile. Nothing can be more ingenious than these imitative passages; but then they are *amusing*, which nothing ought to be in a work of this exalted class. The creation of Man is

the subject of an air for the tenor voice, of divine majesty and beauty. In the opening of the air, the melody is broad, open, and full of dignity; but in the latter part, descriptive of Woman, the composer seems to have exhausted the power of musical sounds to convey the most enchanting images of grace and loveliness. The chorus, "Achieved is the glorious work," is a fugue, worked up with consummate skill and very powerful effect.

In the third part, the duets between Adam and Eve are full of tenderness and passion. Nothing can be finer than the conception of the orisons of the happy pair ascending to heaven and being joined by the choral hymns of the angels; but we have never heard it satisfactorily conveyed in the performance of the piece. Sufficient care is not taken to refine and *etherialize* these celestial sounds; they are always too corporeal and earthly. This, probably, cannot be altogether avoided; but, by making some change in the disposition of the chorus, aud selecting the most delicate voices, a near approach might be made to the design of the composer. The whole is concluded by a noble chorus, consisting of an *andante* movement in plain counterpoint, followed by a masterly fugue. It has not, however, grandeur enough to form a climax to the great work which it terminates; for it is not only surpassed by the chorus at the end of the first part, but is at least equalled by several others. It would be more impressive if it were less elaborate, and consisted more of great masses of harmony.*

* The English words of *The Creation* having been translated from the German by some one unacquainted with our language, con-

The Seasons consists of a series of descriptions taken from the poem of Thomson. It contains one or two choral hymns, but certainly does not, either in its subject or its style, belong to the class of sacred music. Some village youths and maidens are supposed to be singing alternately or together, accompanied occasionally by chorusses of the rustic assembly. In the Spring, we have the disappearance of the horrors of Winter, and the cheerful labours of the husbandman. In the Summer, we have the rising of the sun; the fervent heat of noon, with the exhaustion of all nature under its influence; the vows of youthful lovers in the shade; a thunder-storm, succeeded by a beautiful evening; and the stillness of night, broken only by the cry of a nocturnal bird, and the sound of a village bell. In the Autumn we have the hunting of the stag, and the festive scenes of the vintage. And lastly we have the pastimes of the villagers round the winter's fire.

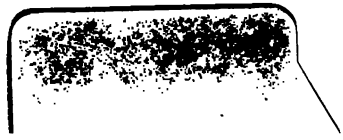
There is much grandeur, and even sublimity, in this music. The thunder-storm is a piece of magnificent description, and nothing can be more exquisite than its contrast with the stillness of a serene night, and the gradual dying away of every sound into absolute silence. The conclusion of the whole is finely imagined. In the minds of the villagers, gathered round their genial hearth, joy and merriment give place to more elevated

tain a great deal of jargon, hardly intelligible, and often ridiculous. In a beautiful and correct edition of the Oratorio, lately published under the superintendence of Haydn's distinguished pupil, the Chevalier Neukomm, among other improvements, the language has been rendered more worthy of the subject and of the music.

feelings. Their thoughts rise to the Source of all their blessings, and are expressed in a beautiful hymn of thanksgiving and praise, which (as in Thomson's poem) concludes the whole. The general effect, however, of the music is gay, exhilarating, and sometimes absolutely comic. The drinking (but *not* bacchanalian) song, and the playful ballad of the country girl, with the chorus of laughing rustics, would require the stage and dramatic action, to have their full effect. The instrumental parts, throughout the whole piece, are full of imitative passages, which are listened to here with more unmingled pleasure than in *The Creation;* for imitations, though familiar, quaint, and even ludicrous, may find their proper places in this description of music.

The Seven Words of the Saviour is a composition of a very singular kind. It was written for a great religious ceremony, called the *Entierro*, or the funeral of the Redeemer, which took place at Madrid. A priest preached upon each of the "seven words" in succession, the intervals being filled up with appropriate music, composed for the occasion by Haydn. Each of the phrases uttered by the Divine Person was delivered by the choir in a Gregorian chant, and followed by a characteristic movement performed by a great orchestra. To this instrumental music Haydn afterwards added vocal parts, with words; and it thus assumed the form of a series of *motets*, of the most sublime description. It has been said that the vocal parts were added to the instrumental score by Michael Haydn, the composer's brother; but it appears, from the preface to the edition published at Leipsic in 1801, that this was done by Haydn himself.

Among Haydn's lesser works, his English canzonets, composed while he was in this country, are beautiful and expressive, and will always be regarded as models. The symphonies and accompaniments to a number of the Scottish airs, composed by him for the great collection of the national songs of that country, published by Mr. George Thomson, of Edinburgh, are most felicitously executed, exhibiting a lively imagination, and uniting admirable harmonies and novel effects, with a faithful adherence to the character and spirit of the air. He has hit that happy medium between poverty and riches, which has very rarely been preserved in the accompaniments to national melodies.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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